



Guidance for Householders

November 2021

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Misc: Student Housing, Radio Telecommunications, Open Space Strategy etc.

This document and other non-statutory guidance can be viewed at: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/planningguidelines

This guidance sets out the Council's expectations for householder developments. It was initially approved in December 2012 and incorporates minor amendments approved in February 2016, March 2018 and February 2019.

Introduction

This document sets out guidance for people considering altering or extending their house. It does not cover new houses even if built in the gardens of existing properties – these should meet the requirements set out in [Edinburgh Design Guidance](#).

All house extensions and alterations – including dormers, conservatories, decking, energy devices and replacement doors and windows - should be well designed and of high quality. In particular, they must meet three key requirements. They should

- complement the existing house, leaving it as the dominant element;
- maintain the quality and character of the surrounding area; and
- respect the amenity of adjacent neighbours.

The appointment of an architect is strongly encouraged in all cases.

This document follows the step-by-step sequence from your initial ideas through to obtaining consent:

Work out your space requirements



Check if you need planning permission



Fit the extension onto the site



Test its effect on the amenity of neighbours and the area



Design the detail



Submit your planning application

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Policy Context

The purpose of this guidance is to explain how new development can conform to the policy in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP) on house alterations and extensions. Developments that follow this guidance will normally be supported. The relevant policies are as follows:

Policy Des 12 Alterations and Extensions

Planning permission will be granted for alterations and extensions to existing buildings which:

- in their design and form, choice of materials and positioning are compatible with the character of the existing building;
- will not result in an unreasonable loss of privacy or natural light to neighbouring properties;
- will not be detrimental to neighbourhood amenity and character.

Policy Des 1 Design Quality and Context

- Planning permission will be granted for development where it is demonstrated that the proposal will create or contribute to a sense of place. Design should be based on an overall design concept that draw upon positive characteristics of the surrounding area. Planning permission will not be granted for poor quality or inappropriate design or for proposals that would be damaging to the character and appearance of the area around it, particularly where this has a special importance
- Alterations and extensions to existing buildings generally raise similar design issues to those of new development. Every change to a building, a street or a space has the potential to enrich or, if poorly designed, impoverish a part of the public realm. The impact of a proposal on the appearance and character of the existing building and street scene generally must be satisfactory and there should be no unreasonable loss of amenity and privacy for immediate neighbours.
- Particular attention will be paid to ensuring that such works to listed buildings and non-listed buildings in conservation areas do not damage their special character. Policies Env 4 and Env 6 of the LDP will apply in these cases.

Step 1: Do I need planning permission

Whose responsibility?

It is the householder's responsibility to make sure that all alterations and extensions they make have the necessary consents. Remember, planning permission is only one consent and you may also need a building warrant or a permit to lower your kerb. Works which require the benefit of planning permission, which has not been sought or granted, may be subject of enforcement action.

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/roads-pavements/road-occupation-permits

It is also your responsibility to make sure you have evidence that the works are Permitted Development and did not need planning permission if this applies.

The Scottish Government circular [Guidance on Householder Permitted Development](#) rights sets out what is included, with examples.

If you want to be sure whether or not works are permitted, you can apply for a *Certificate of Lawfulness* at www.eplanning.scot both for proposed works or those already carried out. This certificate is particularly useful if you are selling your house or to avoid legal disputes. Details are given on [page 23](#).

Good enough in the past?

Extensions or alterations in the surrounding area that were granted permission in the past and which do not comply with these guidelines will NOT be taken as setting any form of precedent, and should not be used as examples to follow.

Do I need Permission?

Not all extensions or alterations require planning permission. Many small alterations and extensions can be carried out without the need for planning permission – this is known as Permitted Development (PD) and some alterations may not even be 'development' at all.

However, there are some limitations, particularly for:

Flats (see definition on page 8)

Houses in Conservation Areas

Listed Buildings

There are restricted permitted development rights for flats, houses in a conservation area or to a listed building, which are identified in the following pages.

Planning permission will always be required for extensions, dormers and conservatories to flatted properties and to any house in a conservation area

New dormers on principal frontages always require planning permission, as do balconies and roof terraces.

Listed building consent is always required for an extension, dormers, rooflights or conservatory to a listed building. An application for planning permission may also be needed.

Even if planning permission is not required, other consents such as a building warrant may still be necessary.

The main provisions of the Permitted Development rights are set out on the following pages. However, this is just a summary and, particularly if you are considering unusual proposals or have an awkward site, you should check the Scottish Government Circular.

What kind of development am I proposing?

There is a hierarchy of development in Scotland: householder, local, major and national. These require different type of applications. This guideline focuses on householder development.

Proposals for a new dwelling house in the garden grounds of an existing dwelling house are local development, not householder. The Council's Edinburgh Design Guidance is relevant.

Permitted Development: the main exemptions

If your proposals exceed the constraints set out here, they may still be acceptable if they accord with Council policies and do not adversely affect amenity, but they will require permission.

Enlargement is any development that increases the internal volume of the original house. It includes a canopy or roof, with or without walls, which is attached to the house, but does not include a balcony. Therefore, a car port is an enlargement but a balcony is not.

Houses

A house can be a detached, a bungalow, semi detached, or terraced dwelling sitting on its own ground. However, if there is any other occupant or use above or below, it is a flat – see definition on page 8. Flats do not have as wide a range of permitted development as houses. These guidelines apply to houses only, see the separate section on flats on page 7.

Single storey extensions

A single storey extension in the rear garden is permitted development if the height of the eaves is not more than 3 metres and the overall height is not more than 4 metres above the existing ground level measured at lowest part of the adjacent ground surface.

If any part of the extension is within a metre of a boundary, and extends back from the original rear wall of the house more than 3 metres for a terraced house, or 4 metres in other cases, planning permission is needed.

The area covered by any existing and proposed extension cannot be greater than the area of the original house footprint or 50% of the area of the rear “curtilage” (ie the part of the garden behind the front elevation of the original house).

Extensions of more than one storey

Typically, these are either 1½ storey (ie single storey with converted roof space) or 2 storey extensions.

The extension must be at least 10 metres from any boundary to be permitted development. The majority of extensions will not be able to meet this criterion, therefore an application for planning permission would be required.

Porches

Porches are permitted development on any external door of the house providing they are not higher than 3 metres, and the overall footprint of the porch is not more than 3 square metres.

The minimum distance between the porch and any boundary with a road must be more than 2 metres.

Enlargements of the roof

Permitted development rights allow the enlargement of a house by an addition or alteration to its roof, e.g. by a dormer, subject to certain rules.

However, dormers are not permitted development on the principal elevation (usually the front), or on a side elevation if it fronts a road. In addition, permitted development might only apply when:

- the distance from the face of the dormer to the boundary is at least 10 metres;

- the height of the dormer is not higher than the existing house;
- the dormer, or dormers, covers less than half the roof, measured at eaves level; and
- the distance between the dormer and the edges of the roof (including any common boundary with another attached property) is at least 0.3 metres.

Access ramps

Small ramps to any external door are permitted development so long as the ramp is not higher than 0.4 metres or longer than 5 metres; the overall length of the ramp and landings cannot be more than 9 metres; and the combined height of the ramp and any handrail cannot exceed 1.5 metres.

Improvements or alterations that are not enlargements

These include: replacement windows and doors, rooflights, satellite dishes, cladding, painting and new flues; and photo-voltaic or solar thermal equipment, etc.

This class is best visualised as a 1 metre “bubble” surrounding the walls and roof of the house. A householder can add a wide range of different types of development within this “bubble” without having to apply for planning permission.

Balconies, roof terraces or raised platforms are specifically excluded from this class, and require planning permission.

Remember, permitted development rights on this page do not apply if your house is a listed building or in a conservation area.

Microgeneration equipment

Permitted development rights for wind turbines and air, ground and water source heat pumps as well as flues for biomass heating and combined heat and power systems are covered in other classes of permitted development.

Ancillary buildings such as sheds, garages, sun-houses, and greenhouses

Permitted development rights allow buildings “incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling house” within the rear garden. The height of the eaves (gutter) of any building, including sheds and greenhouses, cannot be higher than 3 metres and no part of the building can be higher than 4 metres for permitted development rights to apply.

Any part of the building within a metre of a boundary cannot be higher than 2.5 metres, to be permitted development.

The total area covered by proposed and existing development must be less than half the relevant curtilage. If not, planning permission is required.

In conservation areas, the footprint of the ancillary building cannot exceed 8 square metres, without permission. In the curtilage of a listed building, the footprint cannot exceed 4 metres.

Separate permitted development rights also allow for the construction of one incidental building in either the front or rear garden. The resulting building must not exceed 150cm in height, 120 cm in depth and 250cm in width; and cannot obscure the view of drivers entering or leaving the premises, or obstruct light to another building. These rights don't apply within the World Heritage Site or listed buildings.

Buildings must be designed to be clearly ancillary to the main dwelling and should not be read as a separate residential unit. Buildings separated from the main residence and which provide facilities for the main activities associated with day-to-day domestic existence i.e cooking, sleeping, washing etc; will be assessed as a dwellinghouse.

Proposals for a new dwelling housing in the garden grounds of an existing dwelling house are local development – see page 5

Other building, engineering, installation or other operations

Typical development permitted by this class within the rear curtilage of a house would be free standing solar panels, flag poles, swimming pools and oil tanks.

The resulting height cannot be more than 3 metres, and the total area covered by proposed and existing development must be less than half the curtilage for permitted development rights to apply.

Hard surfaces

A new or replacement hard surface located between the house and a road must either be porous; or rain water run-off must be dealt within the curtilage of the house, e.g. with a soakaway to be permitted development.

Decking

The floor level of the deck or other raised platform must not exceed 0.5 metres, and the combined height of the deck and any balustrade or screen attached to it must not exceed 2.5 metres to be permitted development.

In conservation areas or the curtilage of a listed building its maximum size is 4 square metres to be permitted development.

Gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure

The overall height must not be more 2 metres; but if it fronts a road or is in front of the principal or side elevation nearest a road, it cannot exceed 1 metre, otherwise planning permission is required.

Artificial Grass

Artificial grass and the substructure/base required for its installation may be development. It requires planning permission, except when it benefits from permitted development rights. In circumstances where permission is required, there is a general presumption against installation of artificial grass in the grounds of listed buildings and in conservation areas and other instances where it could impact adversely on the character of an area.

Flats

See the definition of a flat on [page 8](#).

Improvements or alterations that are not enlargements, such as replacement windows and doors, photovoltaic or solar panels, flues or satellite dishes, may be allowed under Permitted Development rights.

The exemption is best visualised as a 1 metre “bubble” surrounding the flat. A wide range of different types of development is permitted within this “bubble” without having to apply for planning permission providing that:

- the development does not enlarge the flat;

- the development does not project more than 1 metre from the walls or roof of the flat;
- the development is not a balcony, roof terrace or raised platform or a wind turbine.

Installing a flue forming part of biomass heating system, a flue forming part of combined heat and power system, an air source heat pump or CCTV is not permitted by this class because it is subject to restrictions identified in by other classes of permitted development.

Permitted development rights allow flatted properties with a private garden to construct one building within their curtilage. The resulting building must not exceed 150cm in height, 120cm in depth and 250cm in width and cannot obscure the view of drivers entering or leaving the premises, or obstruct light to another building. These rights don't apply within the World Heritage Site or listed buildings.

Separate permitted development rights also allow tenement buildings to construct one bike store within their rear curtilage provided it does not obstruct light to another building. These rights don't apply within the World Heritage Site or listed buildings.

Other classes relevant to flats include:-

- construction of gate, fences, walls and other means of enclosure;
- Closed Circuit Television Cameras (CCTV).

Further information

This is just a brief summary of the more common aspects of Householder [Permitted Development](#) Rights.

There are no permitted development rights if the flat is a listed building.

House or Flat?

It seems obvious, but ... A flat is not only an apartment in a traditional tenement or modern block. The official definition is a “separate and self contained set of premises whether or not on the same floor and forming part of a building from some other part of which it is divided horizontally”.

So, whatever the estate agents say, “four-in-a-blocks” or “maisonettes” are also flats, not houses. So are some studios and mews. The distinction is important in deciding whether planning permission is required for extensions or alterations.

Flatted properties in any part of the city have limited rights to carry out alterations.

Listed buildings

If you live in a property which is listed as being of special architectural or historical interest, then you may also require Listed Building Consent as well as planning permission. Consult the separate guidance on [Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas](#).

Listed Building or Conservation Area?

To check if your house is in a conservation area or is a listed building, use the Council's Interactive map at <http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/conservation>

Changes of Use

This guidance sets out the physical considerations in planning your domestic extension. However, if the alterations are to allow you to operate a business from your home, then you should consult the Council's [Guidance for Businesses](#) to see if planning permission is required for the use.

If you intend to rent out your property, you will require to [register as a Landlord](#) with the Council.

Permission for change of use will be required to incorporate areas of land which were previously outwith the Existing domestic curtilage into domestic garden ground.

Consulting neighbours

When a formal planning application is made, neighbours will be notified by the Council. It is usually a good idea to tell them what you are thinking of before you start, so that notification doesn't come as a surprise – especially if you might need to negotiate access with them. You may also need your neighbours permission if your extension will adjoin their property.

The Planning Authority is obliged to consider comments and objections received from neighbours.

If, once you have permission, you need to get onto their land to build your extension, then planning permission does not grant any automatic rights – you will still need to agree terms with them.

Other Consents

Other consents may be required before you start work. These can include:

Listed Building Consent if the property is listed as being of special architectural or historical interest – see the separate [Listed Building and Conservation Area Guidance](#) for more details.

Conservation Area Consent if you are demolishing an unlisted building in a conservation area – see [Listed Building and Conservation Area Guidance](#) for more details

Planning restrictions may have been imposed when the original consent was granted, e.g. prohibiting certain kinds of work or removing permitted development rights – check the conditions on any previous consents, including those for the original estate layout if it is relatively new. There may also be restrictions in your title deeds.

Converted, new or altered buildings may require a **Building Warrant**. There is more Building Standards information at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/buildingwarrants. For detailed information please go to the [Scottish Government website](#).

A Road Permit will be required if forming a new access or driveway. Contact the Area Roads Manager in your [Locality Team](#) for more information

If there are any **trees** on the site or within 12 metres of the boundary, they should be identified in the application. Please check the [Edinburgh Design Guidance](#) for more advice. Trees with a Tree Preservation Order or in a conservation area are also protected by law, making it a criminal offence to lop, top, cut down, uproot, wilfully damage or destroy

a tree unless carried out with the consent of the Council.

Some species of animals and plants are protected by law. Certain activities, such as killing, injuring or taking the species or disturbing it in its place of shelter, are unlawful as is damaging or disrupting its breeding site or resting place, even if the species is not there at the time. If the presence of a European Protected Species (such as a bat, otter or great crested newt) is suspected, a survey of the site must be undertaken. If it is identified that an activity is going to be carried out that would affect protected species, a licence may be required. More information on European Protected Species, survey work and relevant licenses is available on the [Scottish Natural Heritage website](#).

In relation to bats further guidance on when a survey may be required, can be found on page 9 of the [Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines](#)

Other factors such as old mine workings (particularly in the south-eastern suburbs), restrictions where water or gas mains have wayleaves across the site; or water/drainage consents from [SEPA](#).

If you intend to rent your property you will require to [register as a Landlord](#) with the Council. Depending on numbers, you may also require an [HMO \(Houses in Multiple Occupancy\) licence](#).

Although not a planning issue, there may be legal restrictions on development in your title deeds - for example feu superiors' consent may be required or you may require the consent of other joint owners – and legal advice may be required.

Certificate of Lawfulness

If you think that your proposals do not need consent, or if you are not sure that previously undertaken work has proper consent, you can apply online at www.eplanning.scot online for a [Certificate of Lawfulness](#) to confirm the position in writing.

Step 2: Fitting it on to the site

Before getting down to the detailed design, it is important to check whether your site is big enough to take the scale of extension you want to achieve.

Working out a plan

When you work up your proposals, always bear in mind the impact they might have.

What effect will the extension have on your existing house? Is it in harmony in scale and appearance? Do the doors and windows match the existing ones? If it is an attic extension, does the roof still come over as the main element rather than a dormer with a small amount of roof left around it? Is the new roof pitch the same as the existing? Are matching materials used throughout? How is the junction between old and new being handled?

What is the impact on the street and the character of the surrounding area? Is the appearance changed? Does the extended house still fit in, or will it stand out obtrusively?

What is the impact on neighbours? Will the extension still preserve their light, or will it overpower their garden and cut out their sunlight? Is the elevation they will see well designed? Will the new extension protect their privacy and avoid introducing new overlooking from windows, balconies or terracing?

All these things will be important to your neighbours, who have the right to make their views known to the

planning authority (see panel right). The Council will consider their comments when reaching a decision.

Note that there is no automatic right to extend and, if your site is too small or your proposal doesn't meet policy requirements, it may not be possible to grant permission.

Gardens

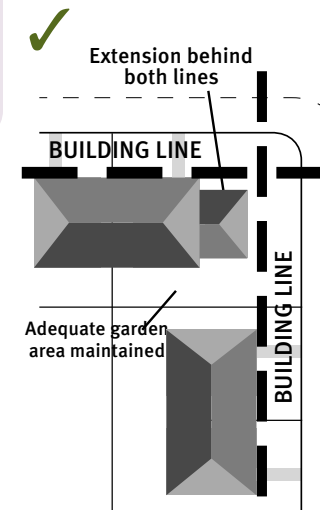
There should be enough private garden space left after extensions - normally a total of 30 sq. metres, depending on the spatial pattern of the neighbourhood - to avoid over-development.

If the plot is small, with minimal or shared garden space, there may not be sufficient room for your extension.

The general density and scale resulting must also be in keeping with the overall spatial pattern of the area. Where there is a traditional development pattern in the area, such as villas with single storey outbuildings, this may determine the form and size of any addition.

The position and design of an extension should not prejudice the ability of neighbours to add similar or equivalent extensions.

Principal elevations and building lines



What is a building line?

It is the line formed by the frontages of the buildings along a street. Sometimes it is defined in the title deeds.

Generally developments other than porches etc are not acceptable in front of the building line as they disrupt the character and appearance of the street.

Extensions that project beyond the principal elevation line are not generally allowed unless this fits in with the local character of the street.

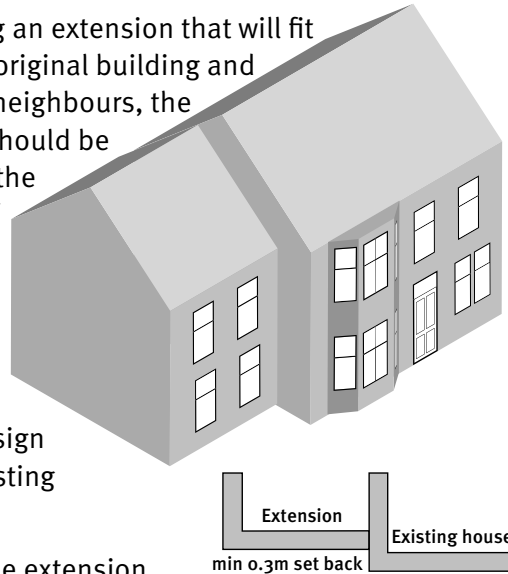
Corner plots can present a particular problem where the majority of the house's garden space is in front of the building lines.

Where they contribute to the character of the area, their openness will be protected by resisting any significant intrusion into the corner ground.

Modest porches may be acceptable where they do not detract from the design of the original building or the character of the street.

Side extensions

In achieving an extension that will fit in with the original building and respect its neighbours, the extension should be set behind the front line of the existing dwelling to give a clear definition between the new design and the existing building



Where a side extension could visually connect separate houses so that they appear like a continuous terrace, planning permission will only be permitted if that is characteristic of the area.

The extension roof should be set below the host property roof ridge.

Rear extensions

Rear extensions should not occupy more than one third of the applicant's original rear garden area.

For flats, including 4 in a block and maisonettes, the opportunity for extending, if any, will be limited.



Bungalow extensions

Bungalow extensions should be designed in a way that retains the character of the original property and is subservient in appearance.

Extensions must not imbalance the principal elevation of the property.

Rear extensions to bungalows should be in keeping with the existing property roof design and its ridge line should be below the ridge of the existing property. The hipped roof character of the host building should be respected. Gable end extensions will generally not be allowed unless this fits in with the character of the area, and is of a high quality innovative design.

Partially hipped side extensions to bungalows are not generally supported.

Conservatories

Consent will not normally be granted for a conservatory on a principal, or other conspicuous, elevation. Exceptions may be justified for appropriately designed conservatories where this is part of the traditional character of the area.

In general, only ground floor conservatories will be permitted, except where underbuilding is required to achieve an appropriate height. Original abutting walls should be kept and form part of the structure. Where dwarf walls are proposed, they should be constructed with the same materials and finish as the house.

Proposals for a new conservatory on a listed building should ensure that the original stonework inside a conservatory remains unpainted and that the colour of the conservatory respects the character of the area.

Daylight and sunlight

Daylight and sunlight are important to health and well being. Lack of daylight contributes to depression (SAD), and sunlight helps synthesise Vitamin D which is important for bone health.

Adequate daylight can also reduce the energy requirements of development through lessening the need for electric lighting.

All extensions and alterations will be required to ensure adequate daylighting, privacy and sunlight both for themselves and to their neighbours.

Calculating daylight and sunlight is complex, but there are some simple “rules of thumb” which can be used to check whether a proposed development is likely to conform. These are set out here.

All new development should ensure that:

- the amenity of neighbouring development will not be adversely affected by impact on privacy, daylight, sunlight or immediate outlook from main (i.e. front and rear) windows; and,
- occupiers will have adequate daylight, sunlight, privacy and immediate outlook

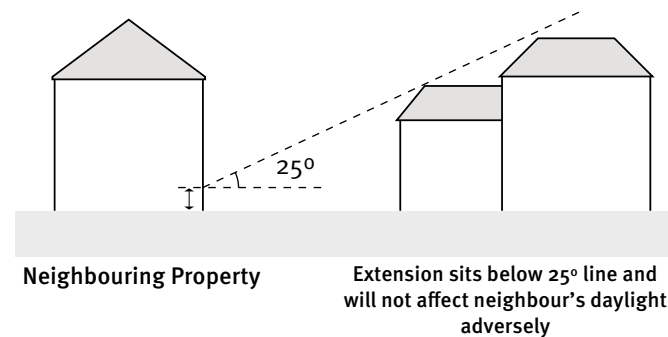
If the proposal does not meet these criteria, and there are good townscape reasons for looking at other solutions (for instance, the character of an historic area), then more detailed calculations will be required. Guidance can be found in the [Building Research Establishment](#) guide *Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight - A Guide to Good Practice*.

Daylight to existing buildings

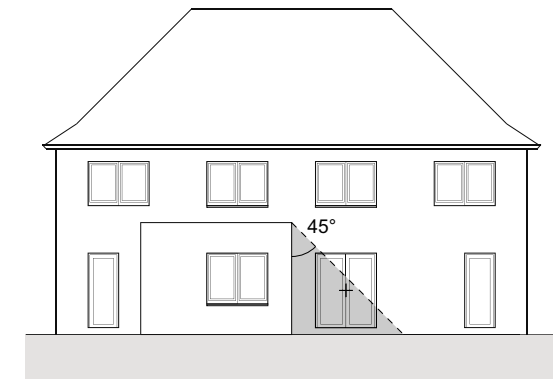
Reasonable levels of daylight to existing buildings will be maintained where the measure of daylight falling on the wall (the Vertical Sky Component - VSC), does not fall below 27%. This standard can be achieved where new development is kept below a 25° line from the mid point of an existing window.

Daylight to bathrooms, stores and hallways will not be protected.

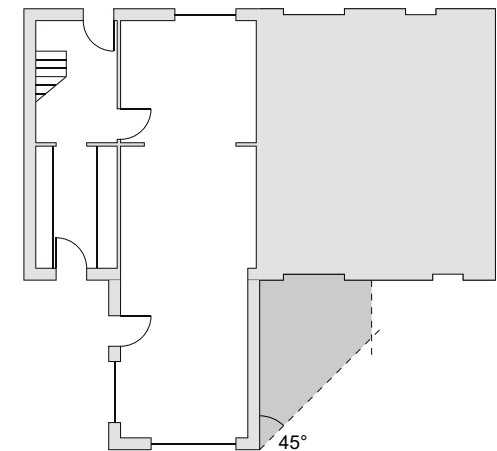
Daylighting to side or gable windows is not protected (see Side Windows, page 14)



For rear extensions on terraced or semi-detached houses, adequate daylight will be maintained to the neighbouring property if 45 degree lines drawn from the plan or section of the new extension do not enclose the centre of the neighbour's window. The 45 degree test is taken at the midpoint of monopitched roofs.



Not acceptable because the centre of the window is within the 45° lines



If a proposed development does not meet the vertical sky component requirement, the Council may require more detailed information on the likely amount of daylight in affected rooms. This will be assessed using the Average Daylight Factor (ADF) methodology. It is expected that applications will use the following criteria for calculations:

- Minimum ADF for bedrooms – 1%
- Minimum ADF for living rooms – 1.5%
- Minimum ADF for kitchens - 2%
- Transmittance of double glazing – 0.65
- Correction factor for dirt, curtains etc – 0.9
- Net to gross area of window – 0.7
- Average reflectance of room surfaces – 0.5

Sunlight to existing development

How the affected area of a garden is used and its overall size, will be taken into account when determining whether any loss of sunlight from a new extension or outbuilding is acceptable.

Generally, half the area of garden space should be capable of receiving potential sunlight during the spring equinox for more than 3 hours.

The sunlight of spaces between gables will not be protected unless the affected space is of particular amenity value in comparison with the remainder of the garden. Such a space might be a patio which was designed as an integral part of the plan-form of the original house.

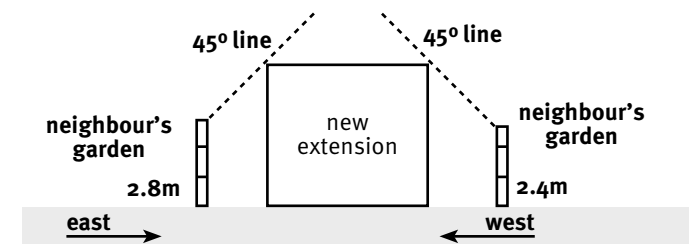
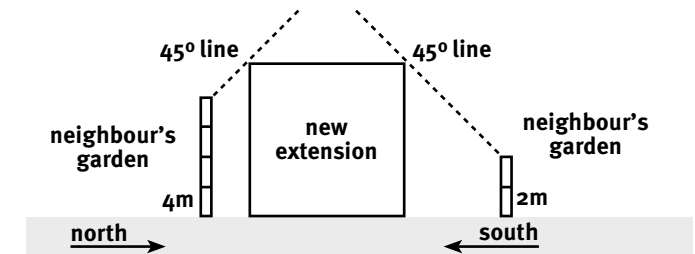
There are various methods of calculating sunlight, but a simple check is to use the 45 degree method.

Where development is located to the south or south west of a garden, if it rises above a 45° line to the horizontal which is set 2m from the ground level, the sunlight to the garden may be adversely affected.

Where development is located in other orientations in relation to a neighbouring garden, the 45° line should be set at a distance from the ground level as follows:

N 4m	NE 3.5m
E 2.8m	SE 2.3m
S 2m	SW 2m
W 2.4m	NW 3.3m

In more complex cases, or where the development fails this test, other methods may be required – for instance, a measurable hour by hour sun path analysis showing how sunlight moves through the affected space for both before and after situations.



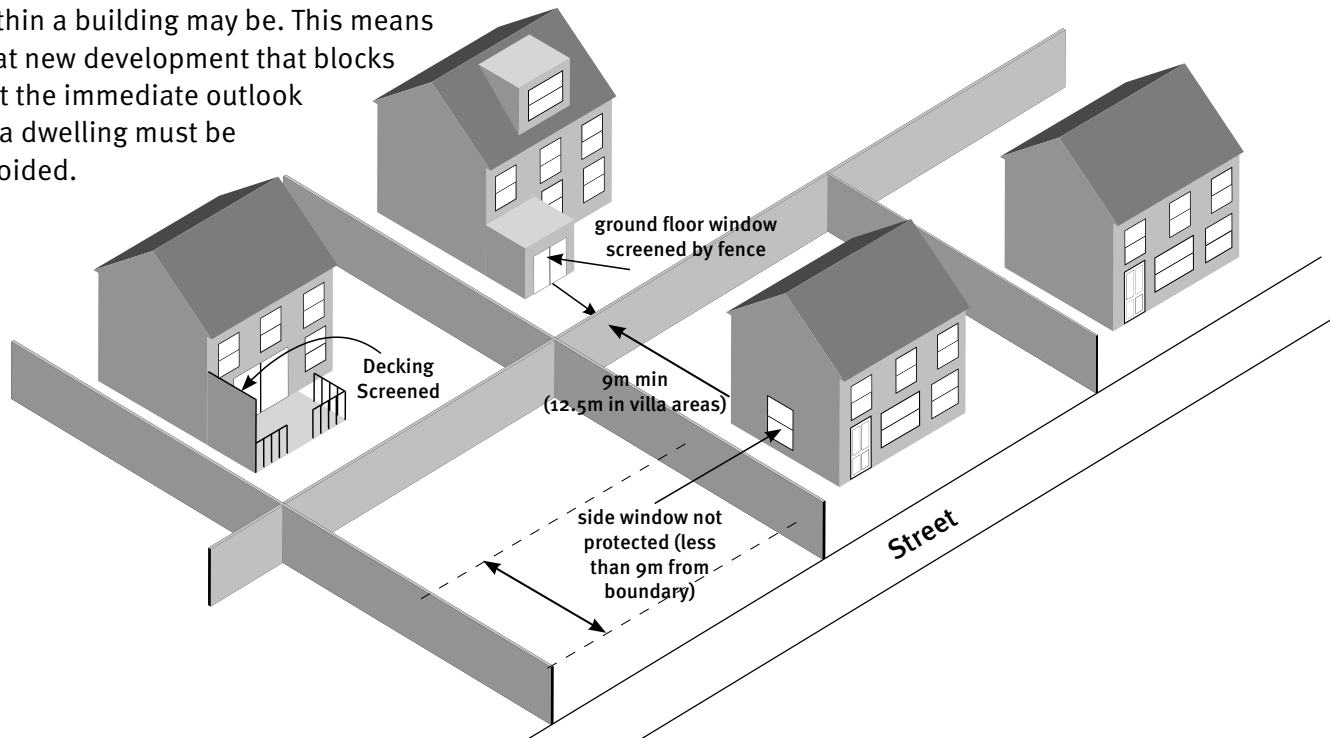
Protecting sunlight to neighbour's property

Privacy and outlook

People value privacy within their homes but they also value outlook - the ability to look outside, whether to gardens, streets or beyond. To achieve both, windows either have to be spaced sufficiently far apart so that it is difficult to see into a neighbouring property or windows have to be angled away from one another.

18m is the minimum recommended distance between windows, usually equally spread so that each property's windows are 9 metres from the common boundary.

A frequent objection to a development is loss of a particular view from the neighbour's house. Though private views will not be protected, immediate outlook of the foreground of what can be seen from within a building may be. This means that new development that blocks out the immediate outlook of a dwelling must be avoided.



Side Windows

Windows will only be protected for privacy and light if they themselves accord with policies in terms of distance to the boundary. Windows on side walls or gables - as often found on bungalows, for instance - will not normally be protected as they are not set back sufficiently from the boundary to be “good neighbours” themselves, taking only their fair share of light.

Ground floor windows can sometimes be closer than 9 metres to a boundary if they can be screened in some way, e.g. by a fence or hedge.

Decking, Roof Terraces, Balconies and Rooflights

Balconies, roof terraces and decking which are close to boundaries and overlook neighbouring properties can be a major source of noise and privacy intrusion.

Generally, decking should be at, or close to, ground level (taking account of any level changes in the garden ground), of simple design (including barriers and steps), and should not detract from the appearance of the house.

Opportunities for decking may be limited on listed buildings, as it is rarely part of the original character.

Permission for roof terraces and balconies will not be granted where there is significant overlooking into neighbouring property due to positioning and height or if the terracing results in loss of privacy to neighbouring properties.

Rooflights in new extensions that are within 9 metres of the boundary may be acceptable so long as they do not have an adverse impact on the existing privacy of neighbouring properties. Any adverse impacts on privacy may be mitigated if the rooflight(s) is set at a high level above floor level (usually above 1.8 metres).

Trees

The retention of trees and landscape can soften the impact of a new building and help it to blend in. Mature landscape should therefore be retained where possible.

If a tree would overhang the proposed development or is closer to it than a distance equal to half the tree height, it must be shown on the application plans.

The tree species and the position of the trunk and extent of branch spread must be accurately indicated. The case officer will then assess if more detailed information, such as a tree survey of the site, is required.

Garages and outbuildings

Buildings within the residential curtilage – such as garages, sheds or greenhouses – should be subordinate in scale and floor area to the main house. In many cases, they will be “permitted development”.

Proposals will be assessed for their impact on the amenity of the area and on neighbouring property (eg loss of daylight) in the same way as

extensions. Some points to note when planning your development:

- the use must be ancillary to the “enjoyment of the dwelling house”; for instance, gardening, maintenance or hobbies, and not for a commercial business (see our [Guidance for Businesses](#) for advice in these cases);
- in flatted properties, the way that the garden

ground is allocated and the position of

- neighbouring windows may restrain the size or position of any outbuildings;
- buildings in front gardens will not usually be acceptable, because of the damaging impact on the appearance and amenity of the street and the surrounding area;
- there may be additional considerations for listed buildings and conservation areas.

Sheds for cycle storage are subject to the same principles as sheds for any other purpose. The Council has worked with Spokes to produce a fact sheet on the storage of bikes for tenement and flat dwellers, and in gardens.

Links:

[Guidance for Businesses](#)

[Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Guidance](#)

[Spokes factsheet \(Cycle storage for tenements and flats\)](#)

[Spokes factsheet \(Cycle storage in gardens\)](#)

Step 3: Design Matters

Extensions and alterations should be architecturally compatible in design, scale and materials with the original house and its surrounding area. This does not preclude high quality innovative modern designs.

Extensions should not overwhelm or dominate the original form or appearance of the house, or detract from the character of the area.

A well-designed and attractive extension will enhance the appearance – and value – of your property and of the neighbourhood.



Extension subservient to original home in scale and size and compatible with original house in materials and form

Materials

The materials used to construct a building are one of the most important elements in helping a new extension to sit harmoniously with the original building. Material characteristic of the neighbourhood and of Edinburgh can provide a sense of quality and identity. Cheap or inappropriate materials can detract from the neighbourhood and the value of the house.

The materials to be used on an extension should normally match exactly those of the existing building. Where the existing building is constructed of stone, natural stone of the same type and colour should be used for the extension.

The use of traditional materials but in a modern design can be an effective way of respecting the character the building or area whilst still encouraging new architectural ideas.

Alternatively, a new extension may be designed to contrast with the existing building using a modern design and materials. In this instance the materials should be of the highest quality and relate well to the existing building.

It is better to set the extension slightly back so that there is a visible break between the old and new.

The use of sustainable long-lasting materials, locally sourced wherever possible, and with the potential for later recycling will be encouraged.

The use of materials that are reclaimed or recycled will be encouraged.

UPVC is not a traditional or sustainable material, and its use will not normally be acceptable in listed buildings and conservation areas.

Roof Design

In general the pitch and form of an extension roof should match that of the existing roof.

Flat roofs may be appropriate on modest, single storey extensions where not visible in public views. Side extension roofs should normally be pitched to match the house.

Otherwise flat and mansard roofs on extensions will not normally be allowed unless these are complementary to the existing roof, or in the case of flat roofs they are part of a high quality, contemporary design.

New eaves heights should either match or be lower than existing eaves, to avoid extensions being greater in storey height than the original building.

Development above the existing roof ridge will not be permitted.

Chimneys form an important feature of many roofs, often marking the subdivision of terraces or adding height to bungalows. Even if disused, they should normally be retained. New false ones can act as ventilation flues from kitchens or bathrooms.

Dormers

Dormers on principal elevations, and all dormers in conservation areas or on a listed building, will require planning permission.

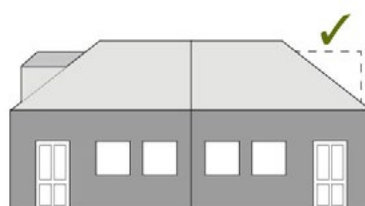
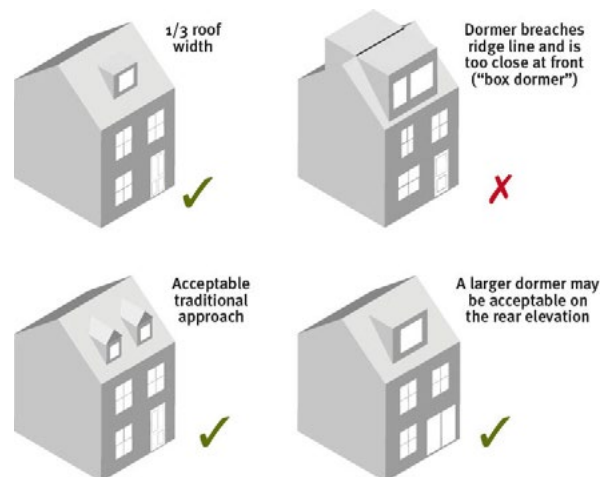
Dormers in conservation areas will be acceptable when they are compatible with the building and the character of the surrounding area. All glazing proportions should match the main house or flat.

Dormers on a listed building will also require listed

building consent. New dormers on a listed building are not normally acceptable on front roof pitches. New dormers on rear roof pitches of listed buildings may be acceptable where compatible with the character of the listed building. Where acceptable on listed buildings, dormers should be of a historic design.

On unlisted houses that are not in conservation areas, rear and side dormers may be “permitted development”. Guidance on Householder Permitted Development Rights can be found in the [Scottish Government Guidance \(Circular 1/2012\)](#).

All proposals should comply with both general and specific guidance as set out below.



General Guidance

The relationship between a dormer and its surroundings is particularly important. Dormers should be of such a size that they do not dominate the form of the roof. Dormers should not come to the edges of the roof. There should be visible expanses of roof on all 4 sides. Where possible, the dormer should align with existing fenestration on the building's elevation.

Specific Guidance

On principal elevations a single dormer should be no greater in width than one third of the average roof width. If there are two or more dormers, their combined width should be less than 50% of the average width of the single roof plane on which they are located.

On rear elevations which are not publicly visible or not readily visible from public viewpoints a larger dormer may be acceptable where this fits in with the character of the building and surrounding area.

Dormers on side elevations will be considered acceptable where it can be demonstrated that the proposal fits in well with the character of the surrounding area.

Dormers on tenement and other traditional flatted properties will be acceptable where they are an existing characteristic of the building or where they are not detrimental to the character and appearance of the building or the roofscape.

All dormers should comply with the 'Privacy and Outlook' requirements as set out on page 1.

Doors and windows

Doors and windows should be sensitively replaced, in keeping with the character of the original building, the quality of its design and in an environmental sustainable way. The character of the area should be protected and enhanced.

Replacement windows, and new windows on an extension, should be of the same size and style as the existing ones, keeping the same proportions.

Repairs to match the original do not require planning permission or listed building consent. However, where a building is listed, consent may be required for:

- Double glazing;
- Secondary glazing;
- The removal or replacement of windows and doors;
- Alterations to windows such as the changes to astragals, and alterations to doors.

Window and door alterations to listed buildings may require planning permission as well as listed building consent, if they are considered to be ‘development’, eg if the new window or door is materially different and changes the character of the building. Please refer to our Guidance for Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings.

Window replacement on unlisted buildings in conservation areas may also require planning permission, as may alterations such as converting a window to doors.

Door alterations to unlisted buildings in conservation

areas may require planning permission.

Permission will not required in the following cases:

- The replacement of doors and windows on a like-for-like basis.
- In properties which are not in a conservation area.

If you want formal confirmation that your replacement doors and windows are lawful, you can apply for a *Certificate of Lawfulness* at www.eplanning.scot

Boundary walls

Walls and fences to the street frontage should harmonise with street and the house. They should not be so high as to be intimidating or reduce security overlooking from the houses.

Front walls and fences should not be more than 1 metre in height unless there is a prevailing size

already established in the neighbourhood. They will not be acceptable in estates designed as open-plan front gardens, if this forms part of the character of a conservation area.

Access and parking

Forming an access for a parking space or garage will require planning permission where it is taken from a classified road or trunk road. In all cases, a road permit will be required for works required to drop a kerb.

In flats within conservation areas and within the curtilage of a listed building, permission is also required to form a hard surface - a driveway or a parking space. For other properties, see the section on forming a hard-paved area in Permitted Development Rights.

Demolition or alteration of walls will need consent in conservation areas or for listed buildings. A building warrant is also needed where the hard paved area is more than 200 square metres.

Parking in front gardens will not normally be allowed

- within traditional tenements and some post Second World War flatted properties (e.g 'four in a block').
- in conservation areas or listed buildings, where loss of original walls or railings and the creation of a hard surface would have an adverse effect on the character and setting of the area, or a listed building and its special architectural or historic interest;
- where the parking space would be formed in front of the windows of a habitable room owned by a different occupier.

For road safety reasons, an access must not be formed

- within 15 metres of a junction;
- where visibility would be obstructed; and
- where it would interfere with pedestrian crossings, bus stops, street lighting or existing street furniture.

Only one access will be permitted per property.

A parking space will normally be allowed if the front garden is at least 6 metres deep, with a maximum area of 21 square metres or 25% of the front garden, whichever is the greater. The design should be such as to prevent additional parking on the remainder of the garden area, eg by using kerbs, planting boxes or changes of level. The access should not be wider than 3 metres.

Materials must be of high quality and appropriate for the house and the area. The paving must be porous or combined with a soakaway within the site; the first 2 metres from the road should be paved to avoid loose chippings spilling out. Gates should be of appropriate design and open inwards, to avoid obstructing the pavement.

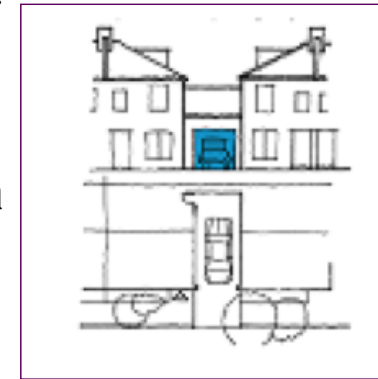
Garages or car-ports must have at least a 6 metre driveway in front to allow vehicles to draw in completely off-street.

Where the provision of parking was part of the original grant of consent, the number of parking spaces should be maintained. Loss of a parking space (eg by the conversion of a garage) may, in a controlled parking area, affect the householder's right to obtain a parking permit.

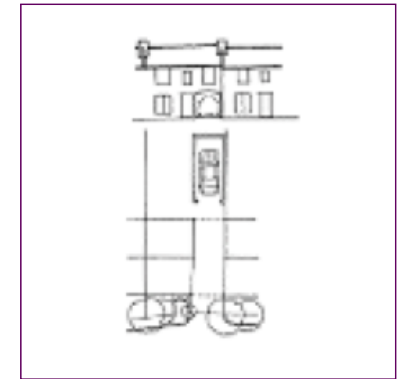
Parking solutions for bicycles are set out on page 15.

Smaller scale on-plot car parking options for residential developments:

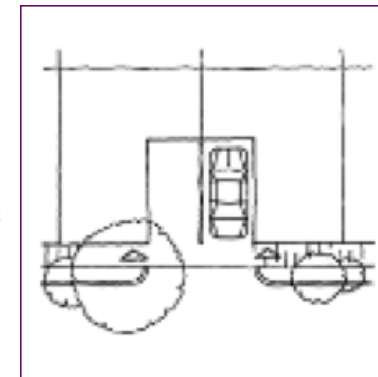
Source: [Space to Park website](#)



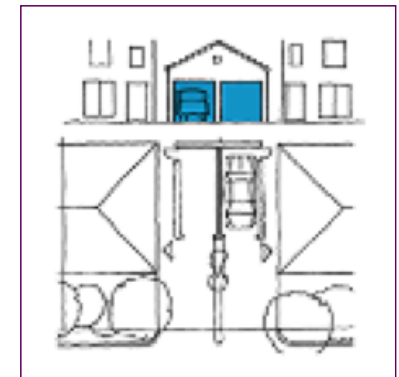
Attached Garage:



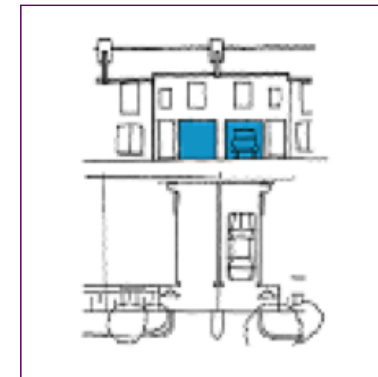
Cut out or drive through:



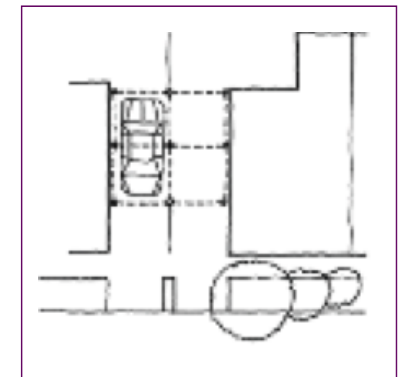
Hardstanding:



Detached Garage:



Integral Garage:



Car Port:

Sustainability

The Council encourages energy conservation, including microgeneration where appropriate. However, some devices are not always suitable on older listed properties or in conservation areas.

However, the re-use and adaptation of old buildings, which have long paid back their carbon footprint, is in itself sustainable.

Adaptable buildings, which allow for change or rearrangement in the future, are also sustainable, as they have a longer lifespan than those designed so tightly that they cannot be altered to meet future needs.

Other ways to make your extension more sustainable are to use environmentally-friendly and re-cycled materials.

Extensions must comply with Building Standards, which place a strong emphasis on energy-conservation measures such as insulation and appropriate materials. This passive energy approach is often more cost and energy-efficient than renewable technology.

Solar Panels

The provision of solar panels can contribute to sustainability. However, on listed buildings and/or within conservation areas, solar panels will not normally be permitted on any conspicuous elevations.

In other cases, where solar panels would be visible from public streets and areas, they should be designed and laid out as part of an overall architectural treatment.

Wood-burning stoves

Wood burning stoves and biomass boilers are similar appliances, both burn organic materials to create space heating. In addition, larger biomass central heating systems are available which can also heat water. The main difference between the two appliance types is that wood burning stoves burn wood, or wood pellets; and biomass stoves burn a variety of energy crops, including wood.

Provided that the wood burning stove or biomass boiler is located inside the dwelling house, the stoves themselves do not require planning permission. However, permission may be required for the flue and any storage facility required for the fuel. Where the building is listed, listed building consent may also be required if the storage is attached to the listed building. A building warrant will be required to cover installation, the flue and fuel storage.

This advice covers domestic stoves and boilers up to 45kW (heat) output. The Council's Environmental Health team can advise on acceptable types of stoves to achieve the required air quality standards.

Other services on buildings

Some new buildings, whether extensions or new-build houses or flats, spoil their exterior finishes with construction joints, outlets for flues and fans, weep holes, grilles, etc that were not taken into account at the time of design. These should be considered and planned in to minimise their impact.

Satellite Dish Aerials

Where they fall within planning control, e.g. in conservation areas and on listed buildings, dishes will not normally be acceptable on the front or street elevation of any building.

However, they may be acceptable in the following situations:

- on the ground to the rear of the building;
- on a modern extension to the rear of the building providing that no part of the dish is higher than the main building;
- in the internal valley of roof provided that no part of the dish projects above the ridge; or
- behind a parapet provided that no part of the dish projects above it.

Considerations Checklist

Please consider which of the following permissions you will need, this might include:

- Planning Permission
- Listed Building Consent
- Conservation Area Consent
- Building Warrant
- Road Permit
- Licensing (landlord/HMO etc.)
- Legal rights to build

(see page 9 for details of these and other consents)

Step 4: Submitting your Application

Making an application where permission is required

How to apply for planning permission

Pre-application advice

Advice is generally only given on larger, more complex, unusual or contentious cases. We do not usually give pre-application advice on householder development.

Apply online

Applications can be submitted online at www.eplanning.scot

Once registered you can log in and begin making your application. A guide to submitting an application online is available to help you go through the process.

Apply by post

If you prefer paper forms then these can be downloaded from www.eplanning.scot

Data protection

When you submit a planning application, the information will appear on the Planning Register and will also be published on our weekly list of planning applications. This is all done in accordance with data protection law.

Preparing and Submitting your Planning Application

Paper Forms

Two sets of the planning application form are required. The same number of land ownership certificates must also be submitted. Guidance on their completion is provided with the forms.

The Council will notify all those with an interest in neighbouring land within 20 metres of the application site that you have submitted a valid planning application. They have 21 days from the date of the Council's notice to make formal representations. Note that anyone can send in comments, not just the notified neighbours.

Application Fee

Fees can be calculated at www.eplanning.scot. Cheques should be made payable to the City of Edinburgh Council, but online or phone payments are available.

Requirement for Plans and Drawings

All applications should be accompanied by a location plan, to scale and showing the application site in red and any other land owned by the applicant in blue. Almost all will also require a site plan.

You can view our [validation of applications guide](#) online.

Other plans and drawings will depend on the scale, nature and location of the proposal. For minor householder applications, such as a garden fence or a satellite dish, brochure details may be acceptable, but their precise location should be shown on a scaled drawing.

All new work should be coloured and the plans should be annotated dimensions and the proposed materials, and details such as the design and location of bin stores and recycling facilities.

For listed building consent, where new openings/changes are proposed, details of internal elevations and sections are required. With larger applications, a photographic survey will need to be submitted.

The minimum detailed information on the plans must be as follows:

Location plan

This must identify the land to which the proposal relates and its situation in relation to the locality - in particular in relation to neighbouring land (land within 20 metres of the boundary of the land to be developed) for notification. Location plans should be a scale of at least 1:2500 and should indicate a north point.

Site Plan

This should be of a scale of at least 1:500 and should show:

- a. the direction of North;
- b. any access arrangements, landscaping, car parking and open areas around buildings;
- c. the proposed development in relation to the site boundaries and other existing buildings on the site, with written dimensions including those to the boundaries;
- d. where possible, all the buildings, roads and footpaths on land adjoining the site including access arrangements;
- e. the extent and type of any hard surfacing;
- f. boundary treatment including walls or fencing where this is proposed.

Site Surveys

Including existing site levels, will be required for all new build proposals.

Existing and proposed elevations

(at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100) which should:

- a. show the proposed works in relation to what is already there;
- b. show all sides of the proposal;
- c. indicate, where possible, the proposed building materials and the style, materials and finish of windows and doors;
- d. include blank elevations (if only to show that this

is in fact the case);

- e. where a proposed elevation adjoins another building or is in close proximity or is part of a larger building (eg flats), the drawings should clearly show the relationship between the buildings, and detail the positions of the openings on each property.

Existing and proposed floor plans

(at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100) which should:

- a. explain the proposal in detail;
- b. show where existing buildings or walls are to be demolished;
- c. show details of the existing building(s) as well as those for the proposed development;
- d. show new buildings in context with adjacent buildings (including property numbers where applicable);
- e. show existing and proposed levels.

Existing and proposed site sections and finished floor and site levels

(at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100) which should:

- a. show a cross section(s) through the proposed building(s);
- b. where a proposal involves a change in ground levels, show both existing and finished levels to include details of foundations and eaves and how encroachment onto adjoining land is to be avoided;
- c. include full information to demonstrate how

proposed buildings relate to existing site levels and neighbouring development;

- d. show existing site levels and finished floor levels (with levels related to a fixed datum point off site), and also show the proposals in relation to adjoining buildings (unless, in the case of development of an existing house, the levels are evident from floor plans and elevations).

Roof plans

(at a scale of 1:50 or 1:100) to show the shape of the roof and specifying details such as the roofing material, vents and their grilles/outlets.

I don't need permission but ...

I want to be sure that I have correctly interpreted the permitted development rules, or that alterations carried out in the past are legitimate?

To cover these situations, you can apply for a *Certificate of Lawfulness* at www.eplanning.scot

Apply on line

Applications for Certificates of Lawfulness can be made online at www.eplanning.scot

A certificate has legal status, giving certainty to prospective buyers, and immunity from future enforcement action.

Certificates of Lawfulness are particularly useful when selling properties in the housing market, where the buyer may want proof that the works are lawful and planning permission was not required.

The onus is on you to provide supporting information as to why you think that the works are lawful under

the Planning acts. When a certificate is being sought for building works - e.g. an extension to a house - drawings will be required to ascertain that the proposal is actually permitted development.

Guidance is available on the Council's web-site.

It may become apparent during the processing of the application for the certificate of lawfulness that this is not the case and planning permission will be required. In these cases, the certificate will be refused. You have a right of appeal against this decision.

Glossary

Amenity - the pleasantness or attractiveness of a place.

Balustrade - a railing supported by balusters, especially one forming an ornamental parapet to a balcony, bridge, or terrace.

Buildings Lines - a limit beyond which a house must not extend into a street.

Conservation Areas - areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

Curtilage - an area of land attached to a house and forming one enclosure with it.

Dormer Windows - a window that projects vertically from a sloping roof.

Elevation - drawings to show what the building will look like from each side.

Gable End - the triangular upper part of a wall at the end of a ridged roof.

Green Belt - an area of open land around a city, on which building is restricted.

Permitted Development - certain types of work without needing to apply for planning permission.

Public Realm - belongs to everyone. It comprises the streets, squares, parks, green spaces and other outdoor places.

Planning Permission – a formal request to a local authority for permission to build something new or to add something to an existing building.

Listed Buildings - Listed buildings are buildings of special architectural or historic interest which are protected under legislation.

Local Development Plan - A Local Development Plan (LDP) sets out policies and proposals to guide development.



HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

ترجمه كلك ما صر آماندهر সঙ্গে অনুবাদ করব

يسعدنا توفير الترجمة MOŻEMY PRZETŁUMACZYĆ 很樂意翻譯

You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats if you ask us. Please contact ITS on 0131 242 8181 and quote reference number 12-0931. ITS can also give information on community language translations.