



# Guidance for Householders

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September 2025

# Contents

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<b>What is this Guidance for?</b> .....	<b>3</b>	<b>Garden Ground and Access</b> .....	<b>15</b>
<b>What Permissions are Required?</b> .....	<b>4</b>	Garden ground and overdevelopment .....	15
Policy Context .....	4	Boundary treatments.....	15
Do I need Planning Permission, Certificate of Lawfulness or other consents? .....	4	Garages and outbuildings in garden ground .....	15
Is It Permitted Development? .....	4	Access and driveways.....	16
<b>Neighbourhood Character and Appearance</b> .....	<b>5</b>	<b>Tree Work Considerations</b> .....	<b>17</b>
Good enough in the past?.....	5	<b>Environmental Sustainability</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Scale, Form and Design</b> .....	<b>6</b>	Biodiversity Best Practices.....	19
Extensions .....	6	Artificial Grass.....	19
Roof Alterations .....	7	Green and Blue Network.....	19
Roof Terrace And Rooftop Balconies .....	8	Renewable Energy Technologies .....	19
Development Specific Cases .....	9	<b>Submitting an application</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>Amenity</b> .....	<b>10</b>	Application Fee .....	20
Daylight and Sunlight .....	10	Application Drawing Requirements .....	20
Daylight to Existing Windows .....	11	Public Representations.....	21
Privacy and Overlooking .....	14	Equalities and Human Rights.....	21
Other Amenity considerations.....	14	Additional Information and Amendments.....	21
<b>Materials</b> .....	<b>15</b>	Non-Material Variation .....	21
<b>Windows and Doors</b> .....	<b>15</b>	Other Consents .....	21
		<b>Definitions/Glossary</b> .....	<b>22</b>

# What is this Guidance for?

This document forms non-statutory guidance. It gives additional information on the policies of City Plan 2030 and National Planning Framework 4 but does not form part of the statutory development plan. The guidance is provided to assist those considering proposals for development and is used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

This document sets out the Council's expectations for householder developments. It provides guidance for people who are considering altering or extending their home, and for professionals involved in the application process.

The guidance should be read as a whole, considering all sections. It should be used alongside other non-statutory guidance, to direct applicants on what development is acceptable and would comply with the Development Plan.

The Development Plan comprises of *City Plan 2030* and *National Planning Framework 4* (NPF4).

This guidance focuses on householder developments to alter or enlarge a single residential property, including works within the curtilage (boundary/garden) of a property.



The Development Plan

All extensions and alterations should be well designed and be of high quality. Extensions and alterations should:

- complement the existing house, leaving the house as the dominant element;
- complement the character and appearance of the surrounding area; and
- respect the amenity of neighbouring properties.

The appointment of a planning professional and/or architect is strongly encouraged in all cases.

Planning permission is not legal permission to build on or access land not in the ownership of the applicant. Other consents may also be required. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that proposals comply with other forms of consent, permissions and/or guidance.

Proposals for a new dwelling within the curtilage of an existing residential property are not classified as a 'householder' development. They are a 'local' development which is guided by the *Edinburgh Design Guidance*.

If a proposal includes operating a business from your home, then you should consult the Council's *Guidance for Businesses* to see if planning permission is required for a change of use. This type of proposal is also a 'local' development and not a 'householder'.

If you already have planning permission in place and are seeking to make minor changes to a consented scheme, you may be able to apply for a 'non-material variation'. Further details can be found at the end of this document and in the Council's *Non-Material Variation Customer Service Guide*.

# What Permissions are Required?

## Policy Context

The purpose of this guidance is to explain how new development can conform with the policies in City Plan 2030 and NPF4. The relevant policies are as follows:

### City Plan 2030

- Policy Env 1 – ‘Design Quality and Context’
- Policy Env 5 – ‘Alterations, Extensions and Domestic Outbuildings’

### NPF 4

- Policy 1 – ‘Tackling the Climate and Nature Crisis’
- Policy 16g – ‘Quality Homes’

Other policies relating to conservation areas, listed buildings and trees may also apply. There are several policies within both City Plan 2030 (policies Env 11, Env 12, Env 14, and Env 20) and NPF4 (Policy 7) which may apply in these cases.

## Do I need Planning Permission, Certificate of Lawfulness or other consents?

Planning permission is required for any works which constitute ‘development’ under section 26 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).

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. Very minor alterations which do not “materially affect the external appearance of the building” may not even be ‘development’ at all.

The main provisions of the Permitted Development Rights are set out in a [Scottish Government Circular](#).



*Drawing from [Scottish Government Guidance](#).*

There are restrictions on permitted development rights for flats and houses in Conservation Areas, and Listed Buildings. If planning permission is not required, other consents such as a [Building Warrant](#) may still be necessary.

It is the householder’s responsibility to make sure that all alterations and extensions have the [necessary consents](#). Enforcement action can be taken against developments without these. Further details can be found in the Council’s [Planning Enforcement Charter](#).

## Is It Permitted Development?

If a Householder wishes to obtain written confirmation that works are permitted development, an application for a [Certificate of Lawfulness](#) must be submitted to [ePlanning](#). A Certificate of Lawfulness is particularly useful if you are selling your house, or to avoid potential legal disputes.

For [replacement windows](#) and some renewable technologies, a [Prior Approval application](#) may be required instead of a Certificate of Lawfulness.

# Neighbourhood Character and Appearance

Development must be compatible with the existing building and surrounding neighbourhood character. The design of a development should be informed by the existing building's character and appearance, and that of the surrounding area.

Character is a combination of qualities and features that distinguishes one building or place from another. Appearance focuses specifically on the aesthetic qualities of individual features.

The need to protect character is not limited to conservation areas. All elements of a place contribute to character, including street pattern, building line, building forms, architectural style, materials, colour, topography, natural features, trees, hedges, landscaping, driveways, and boundary treatments. These combine to create a distinctive neighbourhood.

Edinburgh benefits from distinct neighbourhoods and building types. Development which takes inspiration from the positive characteristics of the neighbourhood will be supported.

## Good enough in the past?

Development in the surrounding area which was granted permission in the past but does not comply with current standards should not be used as an example. Developments are considered in their own context against current legislation, policy, and non-statutory guidance. The Planning Authority will not consider inappropriate development as justification for a proposal which would otherwise fail to comply with this guidance.



*Examples of characteristic areas in Edinburgh*

# Scale, Form and Design

## Extensions

Extensions and alterations should be compatible with the original building and surrounding neighbourhood. Development should not overwhelm or dominate the original form or appearance of a property or detract from the character of an area.

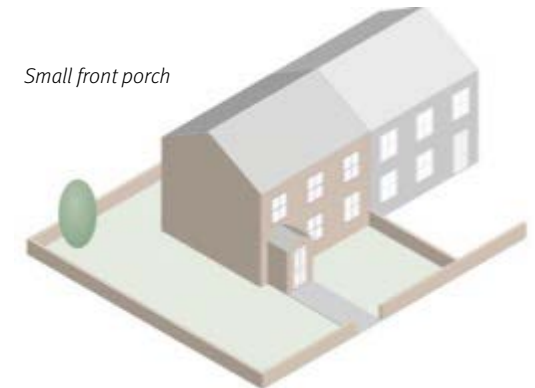
Innovative modern designs are not precluded. However, these must be of high quality and carefully consider the character and appearance of the site. Characteristic features of the original building and neighbourhood should be considered in the design of extensions. For example, the building line can be a characteristic feature of an area, established by the spatial pattern and layout of the street.



Extension by Crew Architects, photograph © Dapple Photography

## Front Extensions

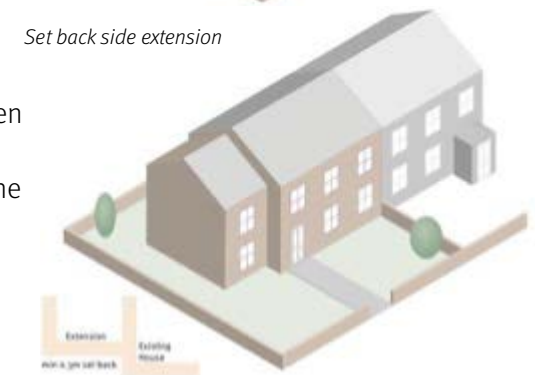
Front porches of modest scale may be acceptable where they are compatible with the character of the original building and the street. Larger front extensions will not be supported where this is not characteristic of the area.



Small front porch

## Side Extensions

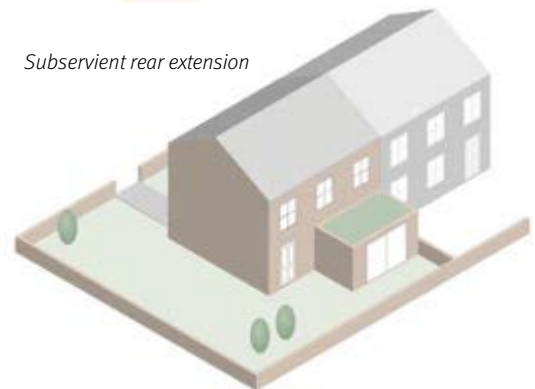
A side extension should be subservient, set back and set below from the original house. This gives a clear definition between the new design and the existing building. Wrap around extensions should respect the building line and character of the original house. The extension roof should be set back and set below the existing property roof ridge by a minimum of 0.3m.



Set back side extension

## Rear Extensions

A rear extension should be subservient to the original house. Two storey extensions will not generally be supported to the rear. Rear and rear/side extensions should not occupy more than one third of the rear garden area.



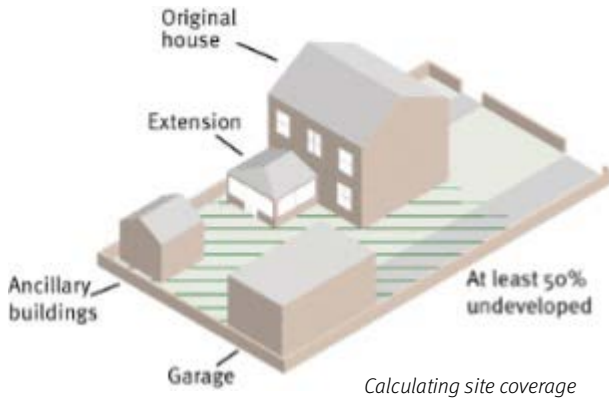
Subservient rear extension

## Two Storey Extensions

Where a two-storey extension is proposed, it must be carefully designed to minimise impact on neighbouring amenity.



Unsuitable two storey extension. Overwhelming, dominating, and failing amenity tests.



## Garden Size

A sufficient area of useable garden space should be retained. If the plot is small, with minimal or shared garden space, the opportunity for extending, if any, will be limited. Normally, at least half of the original garden area should be retained

## Extension Roof Designs

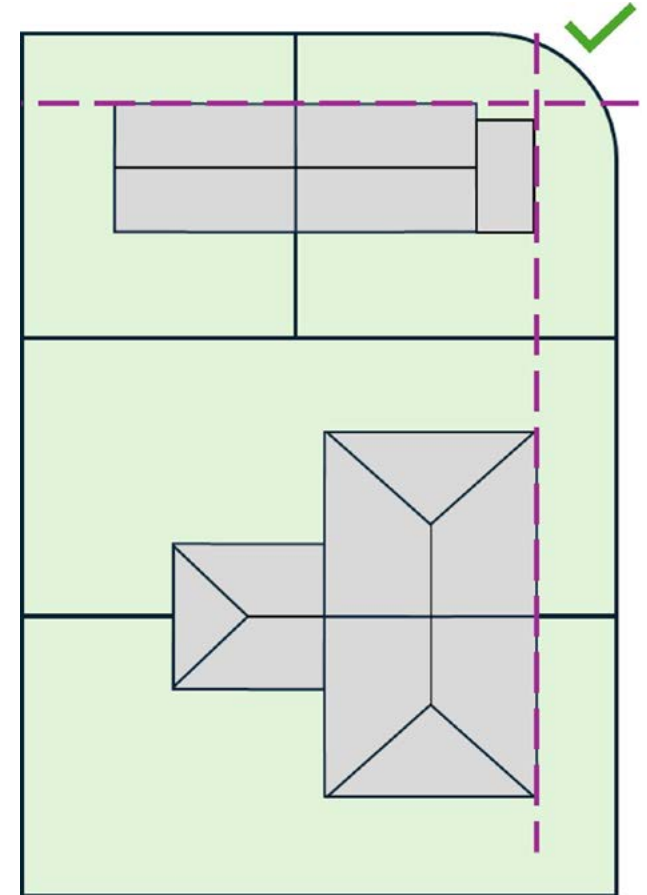
The new eaves height should be lower than the existing eaves. Development above the existing roof ridge will not be supported. Roof design should match with the existing roof. Other designs which draw upon positive characteristics of the local area may be suitable. The incorporation of sustainability measures, such as the installation of a green roof, will be encouraged.

## Terracing

Gaps between properties allow views through and form part of the spatial pattern of a street. Side extensions which close these gaps and give the appearance of a continuous terrace will not be supported.

## Corner Plots

A corner plot can constrain development where the building line or openness of the plot contributes to the character and spatial pattern of the area. In these circumstances, the opportunity for extending may be limited, and the design of extensions will need to successfully respond to the nature of the plot.



Suitable extension set behind building line

## Roof Alterations

The roof design of the original property can be particularly important to the character of the building and wider area. Alterations should be compatible with the original property and surrounding neighbourhood by making use of an appropriate design, scale, and materials. Development should not overwhelm or dominate the roof's original form or design.

## Whole Roof Change

Development to change the roof, such as raising the roof, significantly altering the pitch, or altering the form, will not be supported where this will have a detrimental impact on the character of the building or surrounding area.

## Roof Terrace And Rooftop Balconies

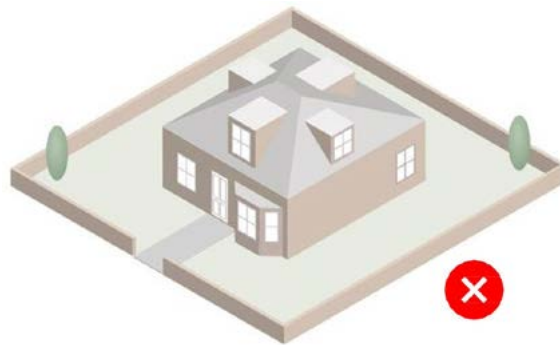


Roofscapes across Edinburgh

The installation of a roof terrace or rooftop balcony will not generally be acceptable. The occupation of a roof can be an uncharacteristic feature and will generally not be supported.

### Dormers

Dormers and their materials should be compatible with the original building and surrounding area. Dormers on multiple roof elevations will not be supported where this will dominate the roof form. The scale of a dormer should not overwhelm the roof and there should be visible expanses of roof on all four sides.



Bungalow roof overwhelmed by dormers

### Front dormers

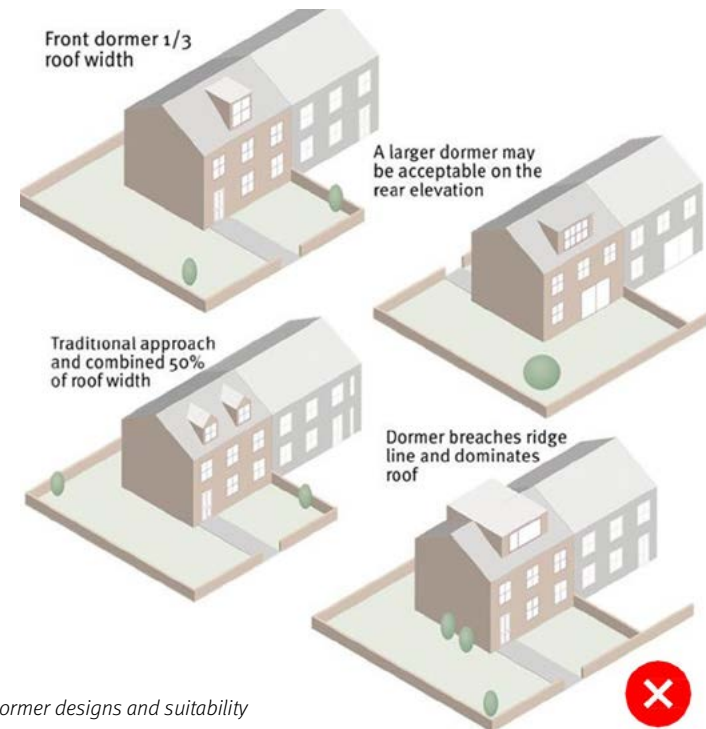
On principal elevations, a single dormer should be no wider than one third of the average roof width. If there are two or more dormers, their combined width should be less than 50% of the average width single roof plane where they are located.

### Side dormers

In most cases, dormers on side elevations will generally not be supported, as this will significantly alter the roof's form and character. Side dormers may be acceptable where they are an existing characteristic of the area.

### Rear dormers

On rear elevations which are not visible from public viewpoints, a larger dormer may be acceptable where this is compatible with the character of the building and surrounding area.



Dormer designs and suitability

## Development Specific Cases

Edinburgh is characterised by a variety of property styles, each of which contributes to the unique character of their location.

### *Traditional and historic buildings*

Traditional buildings are those constructed before 1919 as modern materials and techniques were used widely in the construction industry from this time onward. Traditional and historic buildings such as mews and villas are found throughout the city and are not confined only to conservation areas. Special care should be taken when altering traditional buildings. Development should be compatible with the original property and surrounding area in terms of scale, form, design, and materials. These contribute to the character, appearance, and spatial pattern of the street.



*Dormer designs and suitability*

### *Bungalows*

Bungalow extensions and alterations should be designed in a way that retains the character of the original property by being subservient in appearance. Development must not imbalance the principal elevation of the property.

The hipped roof character of the bungalow should be respected. Mansard roofs and gable end extensions will not be supported unless these are characteristic of the area. Rear extensions to bungalows should be in keeping with the existing property's roof design and its ridge line should be below the ridge of the existing property.

### *Flatted dwellings*

Care should be taken when considering extensions or alterations to flatted dwellings. The opportunity for extensions and alterations may be limited in terms of scale, character, or amenity.

In all cases, extensions and alterations must ensure there is not an unreasonable impact on neighbouring amenity.

# Amenity

New development can potentially reduce the amount of daylight and sunlight a neighbouring property receives. It can also impact on the privacy and outlook of neighbours. These factors are important considerations, which must be addressed when considering a new extension or alteration to a property.



Shadows cast in gardens

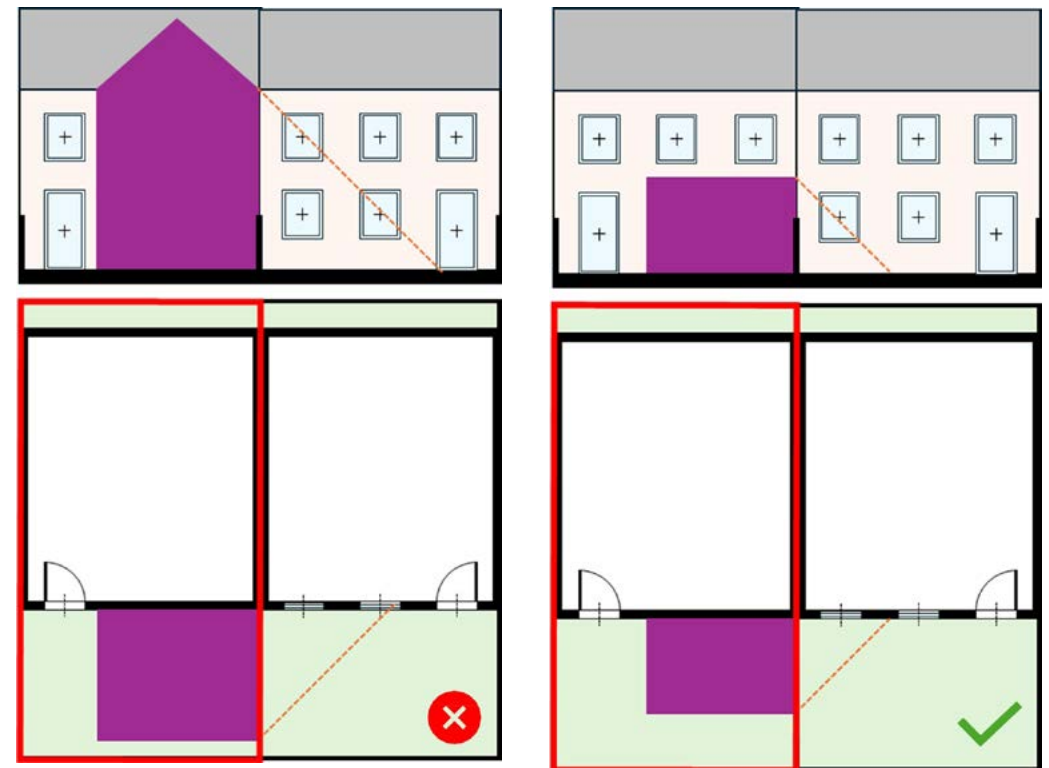
## Daylight and Sunlight

**Daylight** – The amount of natural light which will reach a window after a development has been constructed.

**Sunlight** – The amount of sunlight which will reach garden ground after a development has been constructed.

Calculating daylight and sunlight is complex, but there is some simple ‘rule of thumb’ methods which can be used to check whether a proposed development is likely to conform.

In all cases, daylight to bathrooms, stores, hallways, and non-habitable rooms will not be protected. Daylight to side or gable windows will not be protected.



Daylight test fail in both plan and elevation. Overall fail.

Daylight test pass in elevation fail in plan. Overall pass.

## Daylight to Existing Windows

### The 45 Degree Test

Householder developments will first be assessed against the 45-degree test. If a development meets this test, it will in most circumstances, mean that a development will not result in an unacceptable impact to neighbouring windows.

A 45-degree line should be drawn from the eaves of the extension in the elevation and plan drawings. If the 45 degree line encloses the centre line of the neighbouring window in both drawings, there will be an unacceptable impact.

### Mono pitched Roofs

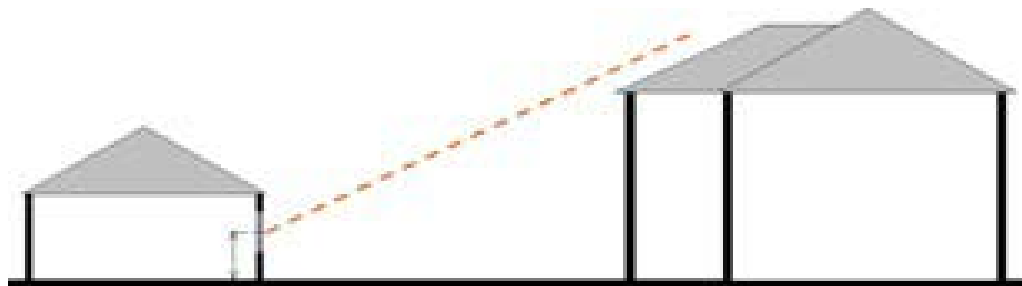
When assessing the impact of an extension with a mono pitched roof, the 45-degree test is taken at the midpoint of the mono pitched roof.



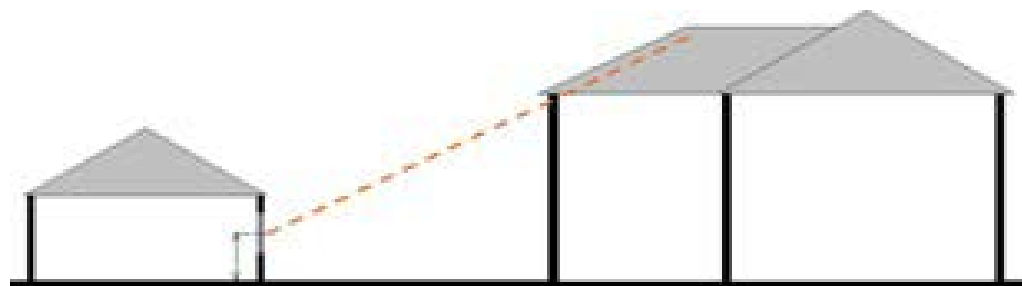
*Mono pitched roof test taken from halfway point*

### The Vertical Sky Component Test

The Vertical Sky Component (VSC) Test is used to assess windows which are directly opposite the proposed development. Adequate daylight can be maintained where new development is kept below a 25-degree line drawn from the mid-point of an existing window, as demonstrated in the example below.



*Extension below 25 degree line. Overall pass.*



*Extension crosses 25 degree line. Overall fail.*

## Sunlight to Neighbouring Garden Ground

New extensions and ancillary buildings have the potential to result in an increase in overshadowing of neighbouring garden areas. How the affected area of a garden is used, and its overall size, will be considered when determining whether any loss of sunlight is acceptable.

Generally, half the area of garden space should be capable of receiving sunlight during the spring equinox, March 21st, for more than two hours. However, even if a garden can meet this requirement, the overall impact of any overshadowing needs to be considered. Areas of high amenity value, such as a patio area are afforded additional protection. The sunlight of spaces between gables will not be protected.

There are various methods of calculating sunlight loss, but the first test to be applied is the 45-degree method. This involves drawing a 45-degree line from the boundary with the neighbouring garden to the sky, with the height above the boundary set depending on the location of the proposed development relative to the area of affected garden. The following heights are used:

- North: 4m
- North-East: 3.5m
- East: 2.8m
- South-East: 2.3m
- South: 2m
- South-West: 2m
- West: 2.4m
- North-West: 3.3m

In the example below, the proposed extension is sited to the WEST of a neighbouring garden which will be affected by loss of sunlight.

Therefore, the 45-degree line should be set at a point 2.4 metres above ground level. In this example, the extension complies with the test.

In the example below, the proposed extension is sited to the SOUTH-WEST of a neighbouring garden which will be affected by loss of sunlight.

Therefore, the 45-degree line should be set at a point 2 metres above ground level. In this example, the extension does not comply with the test.

Further detailed information on the loss of sunlight may be needed, or the proposal may be unacceptable.

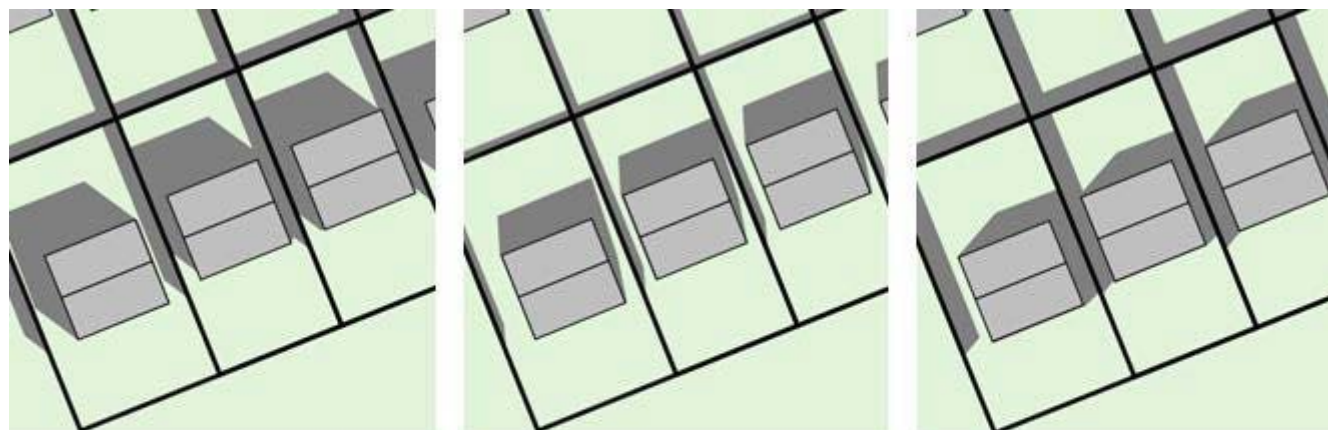


## Sun Path Analysis

If a development does not comply with the 45-degree test, or the test is inappropriate, further information may be requested, typically a Sun Path Analysis.

The aim of this analysis is to show the existing and proposed levels of overshadowing. The analysis must include hour-by-hour comparison on the Spring Equinox (March 21st). It must also include existing houses, fences and garden buildings and include any mature hedges and trees which form a dense belt. It is recommended that this is professionally prepared.

The example to the side shows existing levels of overshadowing for a site, and the proposed levels of overshadowing once the extension has been constructed. Please note, the example demonstrates 0900, 1200, and 1500, but an hour-by-hour comparison is expected.

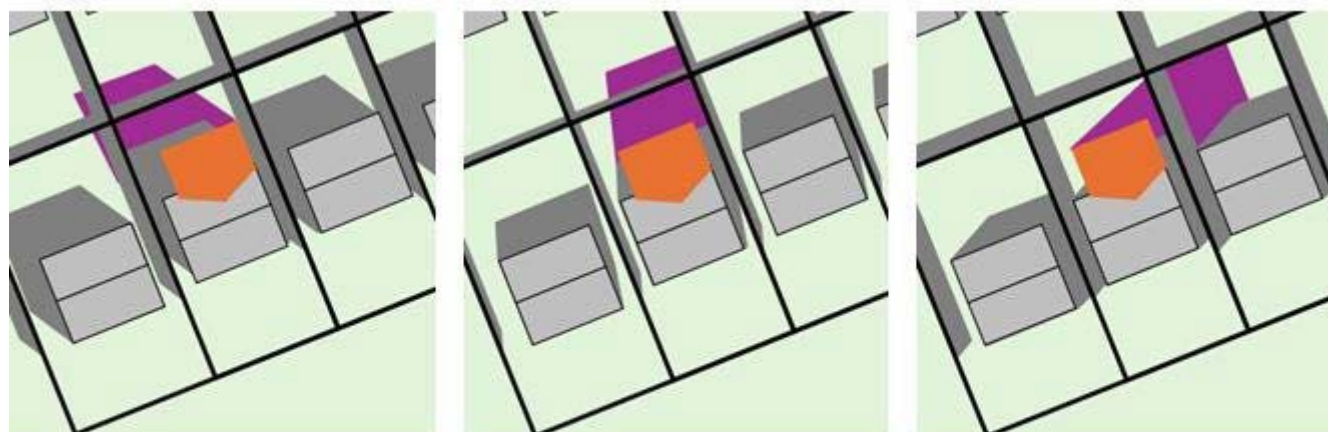


0900

1200

1500

## Existing Sunpath Analysis



0900

1200

1500

## Proposed Sunpath Analysis

*Sunpath analysis diagrams from March 21st. Indicative example of 0900, 1200, and 1500.*

## Privacy and Overlooking

Privacy is evaluated as both the privacy of a property and the overlooking of neighbouring garden ground.

Windows on neighbouring dwellings should not face each other directly or be orientated such that the predominant view is set away from other windows. Normally an 18 metres distance between windows would be required, with each window set halfway (9 metres) from the respective property boundary. In some instances, there are mitigating factors that provide sufficient screening, where a lesser distance may be acceptable.

It should be noted that windows will only be protected for privacy if they themselves accord with the guidance. Windows on side or gable walls will not normally be protected as they are not set

back sufficiently from the boundary. Privacy to non-habitable rooms will not be protected.

Balconies, roof terraces, and raised decking which are close to boundaries and overlook neighbouring properties can result in significant privacy intrusion and may not be acceptable.

Permission for roof terraces and balconies will not be granted where there is significant overlooking into neighbouring property due to the proposal's positioning and height. Balconies, terraces and raised decking may require privacy screening to mitigate overlooking.

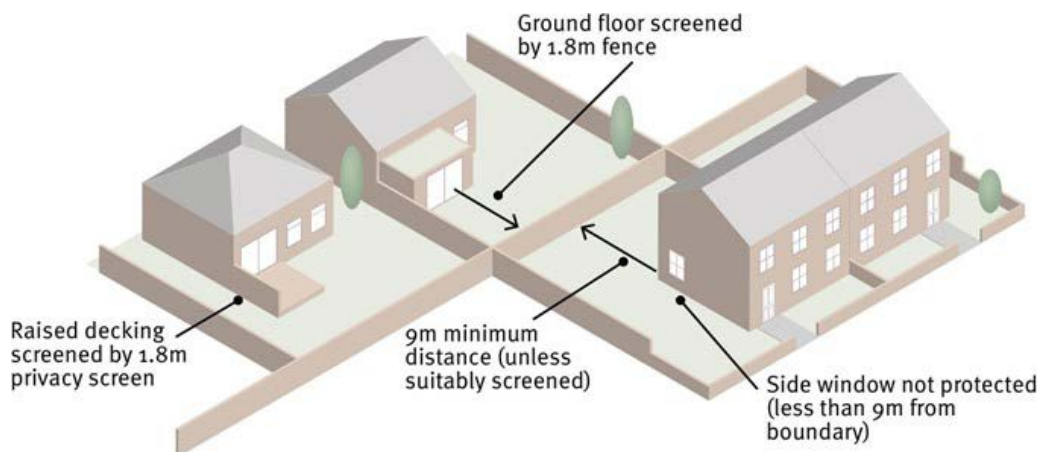
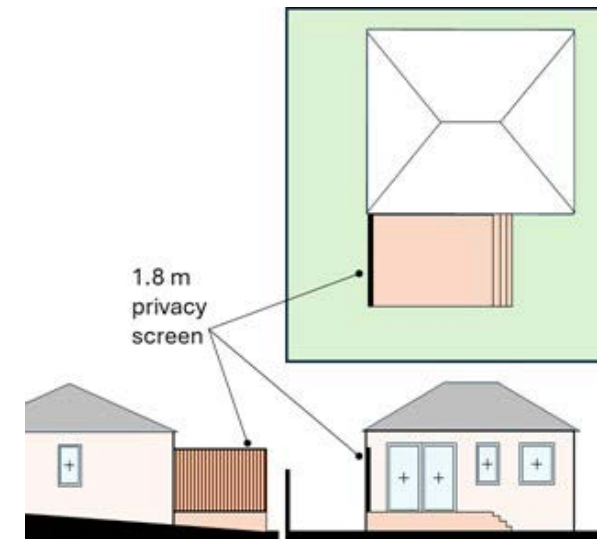


Diagram of various privacy and overlooking considerations

Rooflights or high-level windows should be set at a sufficient distance to the boundary, or at a sufficient height above floor level (usually above 1.8 metres) to mitigate any privacy impact.

## Immediate Outlook and Physical Impact

Private views are not protected. New development should not be overly dominant as to result in an unreasonable physical impact to neighbouring properties or their outlook.



1.8m privacy screen shown in the drawings

## Other Amenity considerations

The Planning Authority cannot control the use of private residential space or prejudice a householder application based on its potential use. Some matters may be civil legal issues which cannot be controlled through Planning. Issues which qualify as a statutory nuisance can be mitigated through the provisions of the [Environmental Protection Act 1990](#).

## Materials

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Appropriate materials can contribute to good design. All materials should be clearly labelled on drawings. In most cases, the materials used should match the existing building and be in keeping with the character and appearance of the neighbourhood.

The use of traditional materials in modern designs can respect the character of the area whilst still encouraging new architectural ideas. Alternatively, extensions may contrast with the original building through the use of modern, high quality materials. Sustainable, long-lasting, recyclable, and reclaimed materials are encouraged.

## Windows and Doors

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Windows and doors are important features of any building and contribute significantly to the character of a property. For extensions, the windows should match the existing fenestration pattern and be of the same size, style and proportions, as the original property.

For traditional properties, conservation areas, and within World Heritage Sites, replacement windows should be designed to replicate original details, including astragal pattern, style, design, materials, and opening method. uPVC is not an acceptable material for use in these areas. The [Listed Building and Conservation Area Guidance](#) contains full details of the options available for replacement windows within the historic built environment.

In some instances, window replacement can be [permitted development](#) and a separate process for [‘Prior Approval’](#) exists for changing windows in conservation areas. This does not apply inside World Heritage Sites.

## Garden Ground and Access

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### Garden ground and overdevelopment

Normally, at least half of the original garden area should be left after extensions, garages, and outbuildings. This is to avoid over-development. The resulting density and scale must also be in keeping with the overall spatial pattern and character of the area. Retention of soft landscaping within the remaining garden will be supported.

### Boundary treatments

Walls and fences to the street form important characteristics of a neighbourhood, and their retention is strongly encouraged. When replacing or installing boundary treatments, they should not prevent overlooking of the street. Front walls and fences should not be more than 1 metre in height unless this is the prevailing character established in the neighbourhood. They will not be acceptable in estates designed with open-plan front gardens.



*Characteristic stone walls and railings*

### Garages and outbuildings in garden ground

Buildings within the residential curtilage, such as garages, sheds, garden offices or greenhouses, should be subordinate in scale and floor area to the main house.

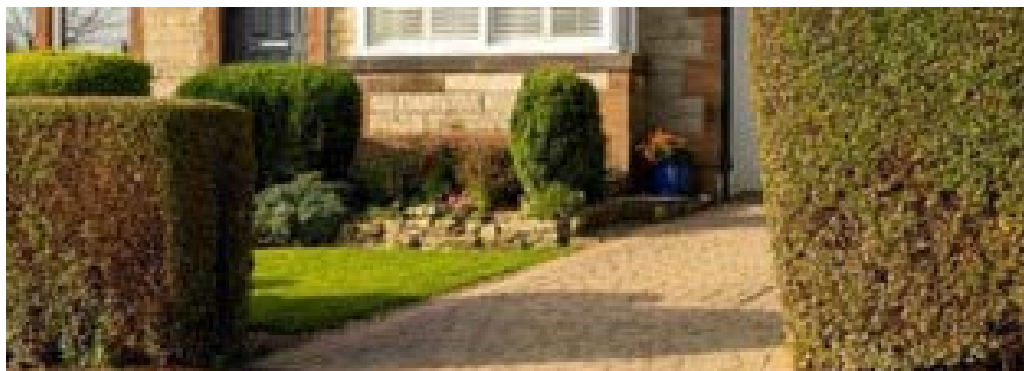
Proposals for garages and outbuildings will be assessed in the same way as extensions. Some points to note when planning your development:

- The use must be ancillary to the ‘enjoyment of the dwelling house’, for example, gardening, maintenance or hobbies.
- The building or structure must not provide facilities which allow for an individual to reside permanently on an independent basis from the main dwellinghouse. Ancillary buildings that contain sufficient facilities to enable this will be assessed as a ‘local’ development for the formation of a new dwellinghouse.
- Buildings in front gardens which are not permitted development will not usually be acceptable.
- Consideration will be given to how much garden ground will be left undeveloped because of an ancillary building being constructed. Approximately half of the original garden should remain undeveloped. Proposals which lead to overdevelopment of garden ground will not generally be supported.
- Permitted development rights may be available for some small-scale ancillary structures and bike stores.

## Access and driveways

The removal of a wall or fence to create a vehicular access will require planning permission. Planning permission will also be required for any excavation needed to create a driveway.

The design of driveways should retain soft landscaping and front garden space, account for water management and support biodiversity. The retention of grass verges and trees is also encouraged. All these measures contribute significantly to the City’s Green and Blue Network.



Driveway with green network contribution

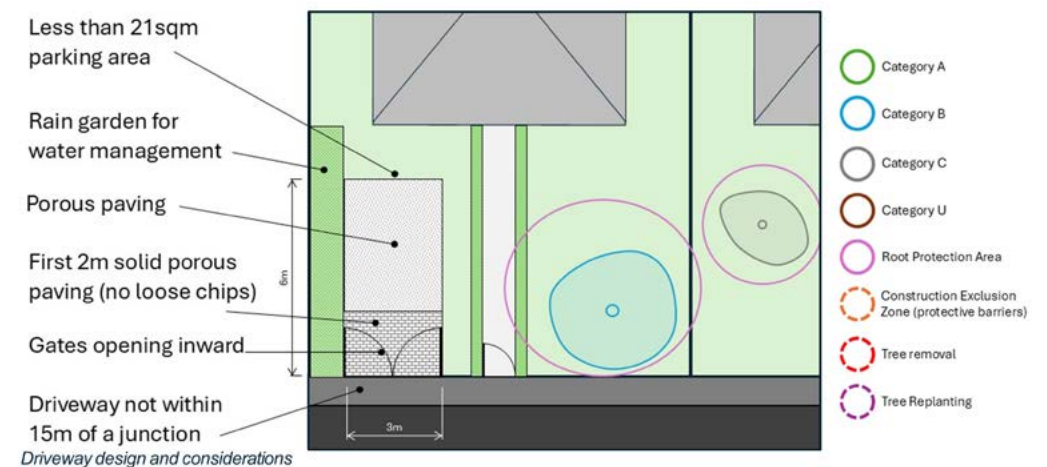
Proposals will only be supported where the creation of a driveway is compatible with the neighbourhood character and will not result in the loss of features, such as original walls or railings, which is of particular importance in conservation areas. Parking in front gardens will not normally be allowed if 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.

Only one parking space and vehicular access will be permitted per dwelling. Measures should be taken to prevent additional parking on the remainder of the garden.

Formation of a driveway in front of the windows of a habitable room owned by a different occupier will not be acceptable.

Where proposals for the creation of a new driveway are to be supported, the introduction of smart electric vehicle charging provision is encouraged. It should be noted that the introduction of electric charging points will not outweigh other material planning considerations when considering the creation of driveways.

The installation of electric charging points and infrastructure within existing lawful driveways may be permitted development under classes 9E and 9F of the permitted development order. Please consult the [Scottish Government Circular](#) for further information.



Driveways required for accessibility reasons should be supported by sufficient evidence. This will be considered alongside other material planning considerations.

Where proposals for the creation of a new driveway are supported, design requirements include:

- Minimum of six metres deep;
- Vehicular access of no more than three metres wide;
- Maximum parking area of 21 sqm;
- Use porous paving or be combined with a suitable urban drainage system (SUDS);
- Avoid loose chippings for the first two metres closest to the road (to prevent spillage); and
- No access within 15 metres of a junction;
- Do not obstruct pedestrians and other road users;
- Where proposed, use inward opening gates of appropriate design.

## Tree Work Considerations

Trees, woodlands and mature planting play a crucial role in Edinburgh, keeping the city healthier, cleaner and greener. They also make a significant contribution to the City's green and blue network.

All trees located on the site or within 12m of the red line boundary must be considered when assessing a planning application. Works which are likely to have a damaging impact on these trees, whether directly or indirectly, will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the tree is not arboriculturally suitable for retention, or a suitable mitigation proposal is provided and agreed which might reduce the harm.

Where trees are located on site or within 12m of the red line boundary, applicants must provide a Tree Constraints Plan showing the accurate location of all trees that will be directly and indirectly affected and the associated Root Protection Areas (RPAs) overlaid with the layout of the proposed development. The applicant must also provide clear photographs of all trees.



*Tree protection plan drawing showing all necessary information, including protective barriers.*

Further information may also be requested, most commonly an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA), Tree Protection Plan (TPP) and in some cases an Arboricultural Method statement (AMS). The Tree Constraints Plan and other reports will need to be produced by a suitably qualified Arboricultural consultant and be compliant with BS 5837:2012.

Appropriate mitigation measures and/or replacement planting may also be required. If you are unsure of the level of information required, please contact the Planning Authority for further guidance.

Trees with a Tree Preservation Order or in a Conservation Area are also protected by law, making it a criminal offence to carry out work without the necessary consent. Before carrying out any work that could impact a protected tree, a Tree Works Notice should be submitted to the Council. In these cases, work which qualifies as permitted development will require a Tree Works Notice/application to be submitted.

More details on [protected trees](#), [privately owned trees](#) and [tree work guidance](#) can be found on the Council's website.



*Tree contribution to the wider neighbourhood amenity*

## Environmental Sustainability

All development presents an opportunity to address the global climate and nature crises, and significant weight is given to this when making planning decisions. As outlined in the Council's [2030 Climate Strategy](#) Edinburgh seeks to be a net-zero city by 2030, and key goals for the council include halting biodiversity loss by 2030, as set out in the [Edinburgh Biodiversity Action Plan 2022-2027](#).

Applicants are encouraged to embed sustainability measures into all development proposals and thereby contribute to a more environmentally sustainable city. The installation of some microgeneration equipment, heat pumps and heating equipment may be permitted development.



*Front garden landscaping*

## Biodiversity Best Practices

Private gardens can be a haven for wildlife. Applicants should consider the retention and introduction of habitats and design elements that promote biodiversity. Simple measures such as the use of bird bricks and bat boxes, the installation of hedgehog highways, and retaining hedges, tree stumps or soft landscaping can be highly effective. *Annex A* of Nature Scot's *Developing with Nature* guidance provides several best practice recommendations that applicants may wish to incorporate into their proposal.

## Artificial Grass

Artificial grass and the substructure/base required for its installation is development. Planning permission for its installation will be required in conservation areas and in the grounds of listed buildings. It is not considered to be soft landscaping. There is a general presumption against its installation.

## Green and Blue Network

Edinburgh's gardens and trees, make a significant contribution to the City's green and blue network by providing biodiverse habitats and spaces that contribute to sustainable water management. Green roofs provide an opportunity to improve the green and blue network by intercepting rainfall and creating new habitats. This is especially important if garden space is being lost to development. Likewise, the creation of new permeable areas, for example rain gardens and planters, can intercept rainfall and contribute to the management of surface water, off-setting any potential impact from new development.

## Renewable Energy Technologies

Solar panels and microgeneration equipment Solar panels and microgeneration equipment are encouraged as part of development proposals. For areas or buildings of traditional character, solar panels are typically not acceptable on conspicuous elevations which are visible from public views. Further information on design requirements is available in the *Listed Building and Conservation Area Guidance*.

### Heat-pumps

Heat pumps should be shown on all plans where they are proposed. Where assessment is required, applicants will need to demonstrate that the heat pump will not generate an unacceptable level of noise, typically complying with the MCS *o2o standard*. For areas or buildings of traditional character, heat pumps should be designed to minimise impact on the historic environment. More information can be found in the *Listed Building and Conservation Area Guidance*.

### Woodburning Stoves and Biomass Heaters

The flue associated with any woodburning stoves, biomass boilers or other similar equipment may require planning permission. Equipment should be located sensitively and laid out as part of an overall architectural treatment. Flues on Listed buildings will likely require listed building consent for internal and external work.

Edinburgh is a smoke control area, as defined by the Clean Air Act 1993. Only equipment complying with standards provided by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs should be installed.

# Submitting an application

Pre-application advice is not available for Householder proposals.

Applications can be submitted online at [ePlanning](#). This is operated by ePlanning Scotland and a [guide to applying online](#) is available.

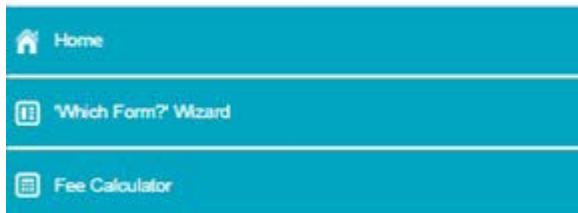
If applications cannot be submitted online, hardcopy applications can be downloaded from the ePlanning. These can be printed and posted to:

Planning and Building Standards, Waverley Court,  
4 East Market Street, Edinburgh  
EH8 8BG

Additional drawings submitted after the application has been validated will not be accepted, unless agreed with the Case Officer.

## Application Fee

Fees can be calculated using the [ePlanning Fee Calculator](#). Payments should be made on ePlanning when submitting the application.



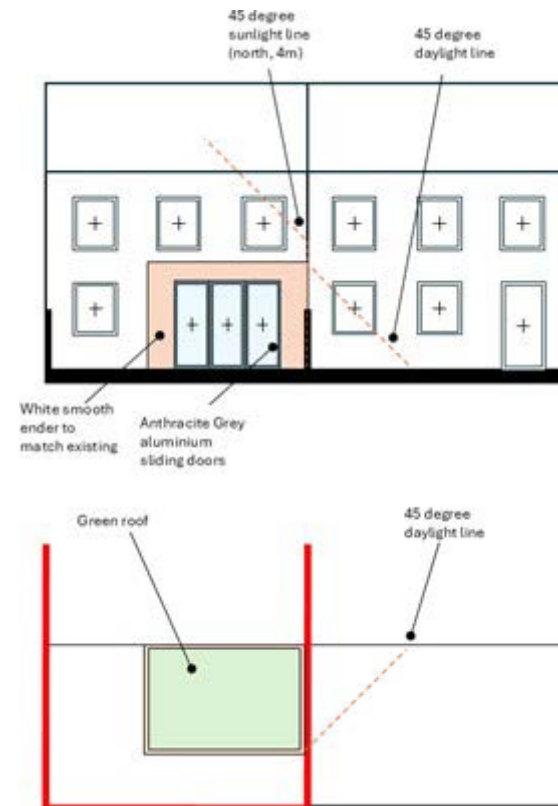
ePlanning website menu

## Application Drawing Requirements

The drawing requirements are outlined in the [Heads of Planning Scotland validation guidance note](#). The plans and drawings required will depend on the scale, nature and location of the proposal.

For minor householder applications, such as a garden fence or window alterations, brochure details may be acceptable, but their precise location should be shown on a scale drawing.

All proposed works should be coloured, annotations should be included to note the proposal dimensions and materials.



Colourised and annotated technical drawings

## Neighbour Notification

The Council will notify all properties within 20 metres of the application site. The public have 21 days from the date of the Council's notice to make a formal public representation.

## Public Representations

Public representations are submitted online via the [Planning Portal](#) and can provide support, objection, or neutral comment in relation to an application. Only comments which raise material planning considerations can be considered. These can include, for example:

- Non-compliance with the development plan.
- The design of the proposed development and its relationship to its surrounding.
- The effect on neighbouring amenity.
- Legitimate public concern or support expressed on relevant planning matters.

We cannot take into account such matters as:

- Private interests, such as property values or the loss of a private view.
- Land ownership disputes and construction related matters such as access or noise.
- The perceived merits of other proposals or the same proposal on another site.
- Matters dealt with under Building Standards or other legislation/regulators.

In determining planning applications, the Council cannot consider matters that are not relevant in planning terms, or become involved in matters dealt with by other regulators.

More details on [how to make a valid comment](#) is available on our website.

## Equalities and Human Rights

Due regard will be given to section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 and to The Human Rights Act 1998 when assessing planning applications.

## Additional Information and Amendments

The council may require further information to be submitted to fully assess the proposal.

The Case Officer may advise if minor changes are needed to make the proposals acceptable. However, if substantial changes are needed and the application is contrary to the Development Plan, the application will be recommended for refusal. If minor amendments can be accepted during the application process, the council will only arrange for neighbours to be re-notified if the changes raise new planning matters.

## Non-Material Variation

Once a decision notice has been issued any changes from the approved scheme will require fresh planning permission or a non-material variation (NMV) application.

An NMV is a proposal to vary planning permission. The Planning Authority can only assess if the variation is material or non-material and cannot reassess the application. Where material changes are proposed, the NMV will be refused, and a fresh planning permission will be required.

More details on [how to make an NMV application](#) is available on our website. Applications for non-material variations should be submitted to the NMV email address with the accompanying form and relevant drawings.

## Other Consents

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that proposals comply with other forms of consent, permissions and/or guidance.

## Trees

Trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order or in a Conservation Area are protected by law, overriding permitted development rights. A Tree Works notice will be required to undertake any work to protected trees.

## ***Building Warrant***

Converted, new or altered buildings may require a Building Warrant, even if planning permission or listed building consent is not required. Please contact Building Standards Helpdesk email at: [BuildingStandards.Response@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:BuildingStandards.Response@edinburgh.gov.uk)

## ***Listed Buildings***

Works to a listed building are likely to require Listed Building Consent, even if planning permission is not required. More details in the [Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Guidance](#).

## ***Conservation Area Consent***

Substantial demolition within conservation areas will require Conservation Area Consent, unless exempt. More details in the [Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Guidance](#).

## ***Road Permit***

A [Road Occupation Permit](#) will be required if forming a new access, driveway or any work affecting the public street.

## ***Biodiversity***

Works which affect protected species (such as bats, otters or great crested newts) may be unlawful. In other cases, licenses may be required. More information is available on the [NatureScot website](#) and the [Bat Conservation Trust](#) Guidelines.

## ***Title Deeds***

Although not a planning issue, there may be legal restrictions on development in your title deeds. You may, for example, require the consent of other joint owners.

## ***Renting and Licensing***

If you intend to let out your property, you will be required to [register as a Landlord](#) with the Council. You may also require a [House in Multiple Occupation \(HMO\) licence](#).

# **Definitions/Glossary**

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## ***Ancillary structure***

Refers to a development which is considered subordinate or subsidiary to the main property and does not form a separate property itself. Ancillary structures include carports, garages, sheds, and pergolas.

## ***Building Line***

A limit beyond which a house must not extend into a street.

## ***Conservation Area***

An area 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, forming an enclosure with it. Front curtilage refers to the land to the front of the principal elevation of the property. Rear curtilage refers to the land to the rear of the front elevation, including any side garden area.

## ***Development***

The carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land.

## ***Dormer Window***

A window that projects vertically from a sloping roof.

## ***Elevation***

Drawings that show what the building will look like from each side.

## ***Flat***

A flat is a separate and self-contained set of premises, whether on the same floor or not, forming part of a building from some other part of which it is divided horizontally.

Flats also include four-in-a-blocks or maisonettes, as well as some studio and mews buildings.

### ***Fronting a Road***

An elevation of a building which faces onto a road.

### ***Gable End***

The triangular upper part of a wall supporting two sides of a pitched roof.

### ***Green and Blue Network***

The totality of green and blue features in an area, for example green roofs and permeable spaces, often combining to cumulatively provide a range of benefits, including positive effects for biodiversity and water management.

### ***Green Belt***

An area of open land around a city, on which building is restricted.

### ***Green Roof***

A roof of a building which is partially or completely covered with vegetation and a growing medium.

### ***Ground Level***

Something at the same level as the ground, as opposed to being higher up or below the ground. When measuring the height of a development, the measurement is taken from the lowest part of the surface of the ground adjacent to the building or structure.

### ***House***

A residential property which does not contain a flat.

### ***Listed Buildings***

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

### ***Neighbouring Amenity***

Quality of living conditions for neighbouring properties. Assessment considers developments effect upon a neighbour's outlook, privacy, sunlight/daylight, and general environment of the neighbourhood.

### ***Permitted Development***

Works that can be undertaken without the need to apply for planning permission.

### ***Planning Permission***

A formal request to a local authority for permission to undertake development (build something new or to add something to an existing building).

### ***Principal Elevation***

The elevation of the original dwellinghouse which by virtue of its design, setting, or both, is the principal elevation.

Most houses are built so that the principal elevation of the house faces a road. As this is the part of the house that is seen by most members of the public, it will usually be designed to be the most important elevation or 'principal elevation'

### ***Prior Approval***

Prior approval means that a developer is required to seek approval from the local planning authority that specified elements of the development are acceptable before work can proceed.

### ***Public Realm***

Publicly accessible external space. Streets, squares, parks, green spaces and other outdoor places.

### ***Root Protection Area***

These are a means of ensuring that the root systems of trees are not damaged or disturbed by construction or other activities.

### ***Rain Garden***

A shallow area of ground or a dip which receives run-off from roofs and other hard surfaces

### ***Topography***

The arrangement of the natural and artificial physical features of an area

***Please refer to the relevant legislation and circulars for more detailed definitions.***

# Guidance for Householders



HAPPY TO **TRANSLATE**

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/its](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/its)  
email: [its@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:its@edinburgh.gov.uk)

Reference 26-0075