

# Home Extensions (including garages and conservatories)



## How Planning Works

This guidance reflects local and national planning policies and laws. Fife Council has delegated powers to officers to approve or reject planning applications. We use these powers to decide a large number of minor planning applications.

Other applications are decided by a committee of councillors, also on the basis of planning laws, policies and issues. In these cases, our role is to assess the planning application and recommend approving or refusing planning permission.

When councillors approve planning permission they often impose conditions. For example, they may require you to build in a certain style or use certain materials. Our job includes making sure these conditions are met.

## What Permission Do You Need?

You may need some or all the permissions listed here. We provide a Pre-Application Service if you wish to get further information before submitting your form.

### Planning permission:

Please get in touch with us as soon as possible to find out if you need planning permission, and how much it will cost. Contact details are at the end bottom of each page. You can check your [Householder Permitted Development Rights](#) online to find out if you need permission.

### Building warrant:

You are almost certain to need this, even if you don't need planning permission. For example, internal work such as installing a new stair or converting a loft needs to meet building regulations. Please contact us for an application form and details about fees. Contact details are at the end of this leaflet.

### Roads construction consent:

You may need one of these if you intend building a vehicle access that crosses a public footpath from a road. You can find more information from Transportation Services.

Other consents such as Listed Building Consent may also be necessary depending on the proposal.

## What we look for

This section sets out what we look for:

1. generally
2. house extensions
3. garages and car ports
4. conservatories

### 1. Generally

Our policy is that a house extension, garage or conservatory should fit in with and add to its surroundings. To do this it should:

- look as though it had been designed and built as part of the original house, not like an afterthought
- leave enough garden ground:
  - for a building of its size
  - for you and future occupants to enjoy comfortably
- keep overshadowing of neighbouring properties to a minimum
- not intrude on a neighbour's privacy;
- be energy-efficient
- be accessible by people with impaired mobility.

When we apply the policy, we consider how the extension will affect your existing home, garden and the general character of the area you live in.

We also take account of previous council decisions. But remember that standards, policies and what people find acceptable all change. Styles and designs that were acceptable in the past may no longer be. Here are some tips to help you stay in line with our policy:

- Make sure the extension does not alter the character of your house
- Use a pitched roof, unless your house has a flat roof, that matches the angle of your house
- The walls, roof, windows and other external details and materials must match those of your house
- Avoid windows that directly overlook next door's garden or give close views inside a neighbour's house (see Appendix A)
- Do not use up too much of a small garden for a big extension
- Consider whether the extension will block sunlight. If it will, you might need to set it back from the boundary with neighbouring properties
- Make the most of any south-facing areas, using designs, features and materials that take advantage of heat from the sun. By the same token, avoid large glazed areas that face north.
- Plan for your long-term mobility needs and accessibility for visitors.

#### Listed buildings and conservation areas:

Separate policies may apply if you plan to alter or add to a listed building or a house in a conservation area. Please ask us for advice.

#### For more information about planning policies:

The local plan for your area will have more detailed information about planning policies. This information can be found in our web pages under "planning policy and guidance".

## 2. House Extensions

What we look for depends on whether you plan to build:

- An extension visible from public areas
- A side extension
- A rear extension

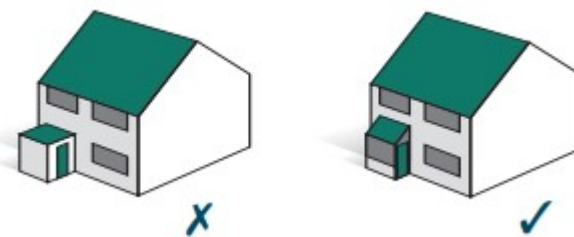
#### a) Extensions that are visible from public areas:

Extensions that can be seen by the public – for example porches or extensions that overlook a street - will need planning permission.

Porches:

Many front extensions are weather porches.

Normally they should be glazed in see-through glass to minimise the impact of how they look as part of the house and of the street.



Roofs should normally have only one slope (this is known as mono-pitch). Modern housing estates provide little opportunity for large sun porches or conservatories facing streets. We normally accept only small porches of up to 2 metres wide by 1.5 metres deep.

#### OTHER EXTENSIONS:

The size and design of extensions should fit in with the rest of the building. They should not dominate or detract from it or from neighbouring buildings.

They should be visually and physically subordinate to the existing frontage.

The materials should be glass or should match the existing house. We only accept timber cladding if this is what the existing house is designed with.

We do not set limits on the size of front extensions, but we do take account of factors such as:

- their distance from the road
- the size of the existing property
- their position in relation to existing houses

#### b) Side extensions:

These usually have at least one side visible from public areas and must fully take into account how your house looks from public areas.

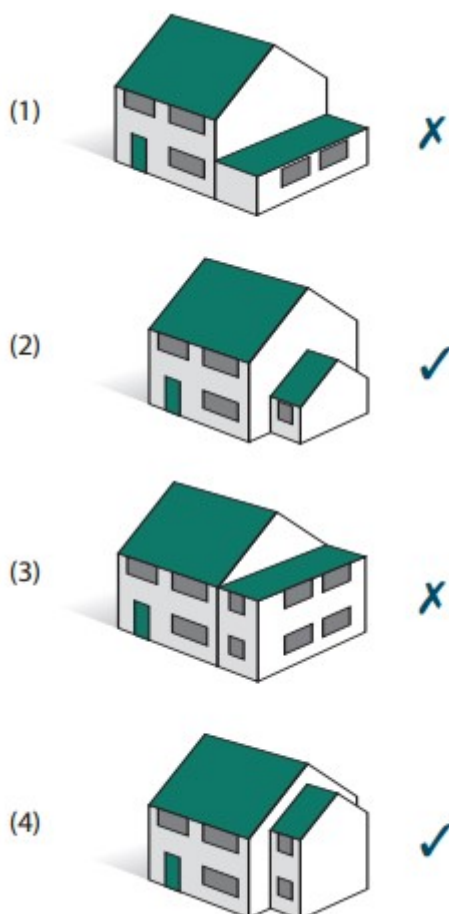
It is a good idea to build the extension behind the building line, even if only by the length of a brick. This helps to hide the join between old and new. A pitched roof to match your existing roof is generally desirable and essential for two-storey extensions.

Extensions often need to be built away from property boundaries for easy access, maintenance and to reduce the likelihood of neighbour disputes.

If you had a parking space within your property before the extension you need to retain it, but without hard-surfacing most of your front garden. This normally means setting the extension back six metres from the pavement or edge of the service strip (a grassed-over area covering access to services such as water and gas). The parking space needs to meet council standards.

If the extension has two storeys you will need to set it back from the front of the existing building by at least a metre to avoid it looking like a terrace. We will not approve balconies that intrude on neighbours' privacy. (See illustrations 3 and 4)

If the extension is on a street corner, take care that it does not intrude or dominate - for example, by blocking motorists' views of traffic. If you're in any doubt, we recommend that you seek further advice before you proceed.



### c) Rear extensions:

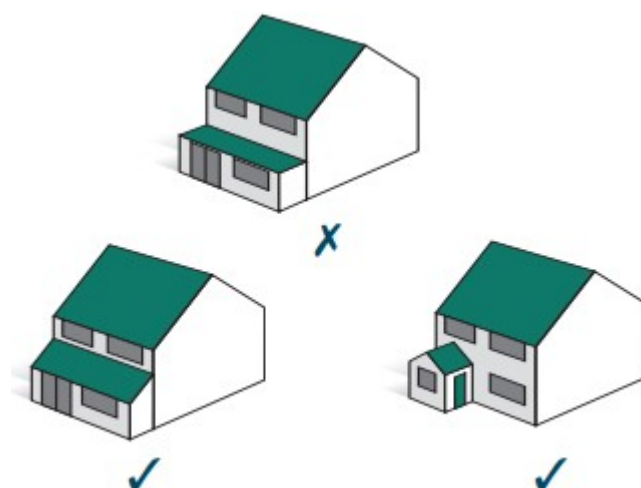
The extension must meet the standards the council sets for garden ground. (Section 3 of this leaflet has more information about these.)

It must also cause minimum loss of privacy and daylight to neighbouring properties. For example, you might need to consider:

- frosted glass on some windows
- a fence along the boundary
- keeping the extension at a suitable distance from your neighbour's home (we can provide a table of acceptable separation distances).

Even if the extension may be out of public view you should still use materials that match your house.

If the extension has two storeys the roof pitch must match the existing house. We won't accept a flat roof.



If the extension has a balcony it must not overlook nearby properties or affect neighbours' privacy or their enjoyment of their properties. We seldom accept balconies.

We are likely to refuse planning permission:

- if an extension causes too much overshadowing or loss of daylight to a neighbour's property
- for a two-storey extension on a property boundary, because of the impact on daylight and overshadowing.

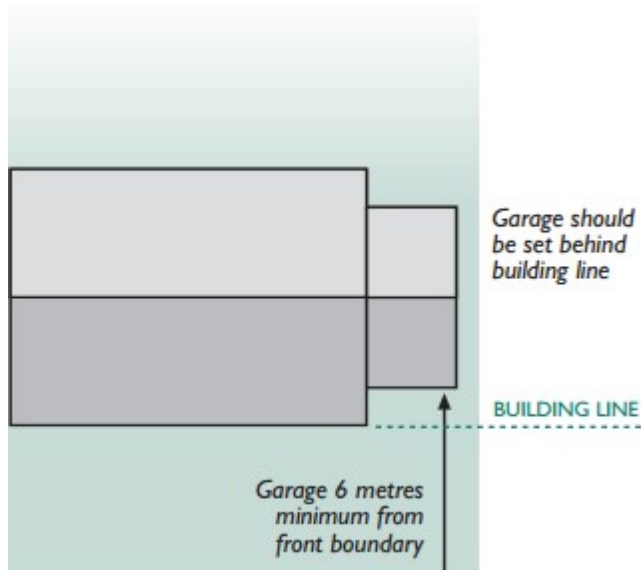
### 3. Garages and Car Ports

These should normally be built at the side of or behind a house, provided enough garden ground is available.

They should not normally project beyond the front of the house unless they are:

- combined with a porch projection or canopy
- at least six metres from the front boundary

Garages can be integral to a larger extension, for example, a two storey side extension. They must meet the conditions that apply to these extensions.



Driveways should not be steeper than 1 in 10 and at least the first 2 metres should be hard surfaced to minimise the risk of loose chipping on roads or footpaths.

Make sure there is always clear access by foot from the front of the extension to the back garden. Access needs to be clear while building is under way.

We normally only consider front-garden garages if:

- the land is too steep for a vehicle
- there is no off-street parking alternative.

In these cases the garage floor level should be at or about footpath or road level. In a prominent location, it must be dug into the slope to reduce its visual impact. The garage door must not open out over, or overhang, the road or footpath.

### 4. Conservatories

We generally define a conservatory as a building that is:

- attached to someone's property
- has an entrance from the property
- has a roof that's at least three quarters translucent
- has walls that are at least half glazed

If the roof and glazing are below these figures, the building is likely to be more accurately described as an extension.

It is particularly important to safeguard neighbours' privacy. So you may have to consider fencing, a firewall or frosted glass.

The conservatory must meet the standards the council sets for gardens.

The finish of the support walls must match the existing house. The materials and colour of window frames should also match the existing house windows.

Not all conservatory suppliers know planning and building standards rules and regulations thoroughly. We strongly recommend you consult one of our offices before you commit to buying.

#### What You Need To Consider

Materials:

You should use materials that match those of your house. If you can't find identical materials you should still be able to find acceptable substitutes.

Roofs:

The extension roof should have the same angle, pitch and style as the existing house. Ridge lines should be parallel to or at 90 degrees to the existing roof.

Flat roofs are less acceptable than pitched roofs. They do not last long and can spoil the look of a house. They often require repairs, so can also be a costly choice.

#### How much garden will be left?

If your house is relatively new or has a big garden a modest extension is unlikely to remove an excessive

amount of garden ground. But an extension may not be possible if the house is older and has a small garden.

However we may relax garden ground conditions if:

- the property has been derelict and is being renovated
- the property is for someone with a long-term disability.

We can provide you with more detailed guidance on garden ground and extensions. Please contact your nearest Fife Council area office for a free leaflet or download the information from [www.fifedirect.org.uk/planning](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/planning).

### **Remember**

- Do follow the guidance in this leaflet
- Do consult the council's Planning and Building Standards and Safety staff before you submit your plans
- Do submit your plans in plenty of time
- Don't be over ambitious
- Don't rely on the opinion of unqualified people or salespeople on whether or not you need planning permission or a building warrant
- Don't let work begin without planning permission or a building warrant

Reviewed April 2016

# APPENDIX A

## Minimum distances between window openings

		Angle at window of building to be erected not more than									
		90°	80°	70°	60°	50°	40°	30°	20°	10°	0°
Angle at window of any other building not more than	90°	18	18	18	18	13	9	6	4	3	2
	80°	18	18	18	13	9	6	4	3	2	
	70°	18	18	13	9	6	4	3	2		
	60°	18	13	9	6	4	3	2			
	50°	13	9	6	4	3	2				
	40°	9	6	4	3	2					
	30°	6	4	3	2						
	20°	4	3	2							
	10°	3	2								
	0°	2									

DISTANCES IN METRES

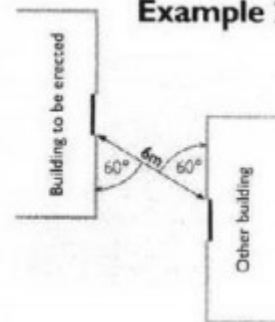
### NOTE

- 'Angle' means the horizontal angle included between:
  - the shortest line joining any part of one window opening to any part of the other
  - the vertical plane of the opening of the window
- Distances shall be interpolated for intermediate angles

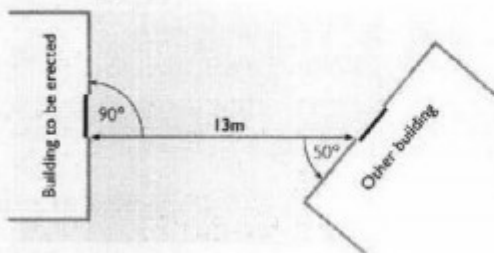
**Example 1**



**Example 2**



**Example 3**



**Example 4**

