

Brentham Society Advice Sheet:

HOUSE EXTENSIONS



BACKGROUND:

Developments in a conservation area are required to preserve or enhance the character of the area therefore an extension needs to be carefully designed to suit the particular position and design of the house. An extension that is suitable for one house may have a damaging impact in another position.

A significant feature of Brentham is that most of the houses still retain the character of the original architecture without the intrusion of additions from different periods or fashions. Most of the houses are part of a terrace or pair of semis and form part of a cohesive concept across a block. The detached houses are arranged together to form attractive views with the exception of the post WW2 developments.

Also of significance is the proportion of garden space to building, the importance of the rear architecture and landscaping, the outlook from the rears of the houses and the space between blocks that allows the sky and the rear landscape to be seen from the street between buildings.

Policy

Extensions to dwellings will only be allowed where they respect the character of the original estate. Important design features should be incorporated, and the amenity of nearby dwellings respected. Extensions should be single storey and confined to the rear of the building; they will not normally be permitted across the whole width of a property nor to a depth greater than 8ft (2.4m). Normally extensions will be restricted to half the width of the house.

Reasons:

1. It is essential that extensions should be in proportion with the original house and reflect the original concept, particularly as most houses are of modest size.
2. To retain the character of the estate it is important that as far as possible extensions look like original features.

The following points will be considered when assessing whether an extension design is appropriate:

- Which group of Brentham architecture does the house belong to?
- What materials and details are used in the existing architecture?
- Is the original concept of the house that of a modest cottage or is it a more expansive design?
- Is the house part of a block?
- Is the concept of the block symmetrical?
- Have any other extensions been built on this block and when were they built?
- What impact will the addition have on the view from the rear of neighbouring houses? Open views across the backlands were part of the original planned amenity for the houses.
- Will an extension overlook neighbouring properties?
- Will the addition intrude into the view between neighbouring houses?
- Will the extension be visible from the street?
- Will the extension affect any significant trees or hedging?

Once these questions are considered it can be seen if the addition meets the policy criteria. Proportion, bulk, the position of the new building and its impact on the existing block elevation are as important as making sure that the right details are employed.

For further advice contact advice@brentham.com

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Further Advice

A well-designed extension should look like a part of the original structure, therefore the design, particularly the windows, doors and type of roof, should match the original house. It may prove possible to utilise the original window frame and door. Materials used must also match those of the original property. To be more visually acceptable, extensions will normally be expected to have a roof with a pitch that reflects the existing roof slope, and matching eaves details, including exposed rafters if they appear on the main house. In those few cases where it is difficult to install a pitched roof a flat roof may be considered but this will depend on the situation, other extensions on the block and would require a design and materials that reflects the original flat roofs in Brentham.

Care needs to be taken in the siting of the extension. Original outbuildings or extensions to the adjoining property together with the need to avoid overshadowing and overlooking should be considered. Extensions will not normally be permitted where a continuous building will be formed across several houses. New extensions should as far as possible match any adjacent extensions, or be so designed as to facilitate an adjoining extension at a later date if close to the boundary, accordingly particular care needs to be taken over details of the slope, eaves and height. The possible formation of small gaps between two extensions is not acceptable as such gaps are poor building practice and do not exist in the original architecture. In some situations, it is desirable for two adjoining houses to make a joint application so that adjoining extensions are designed and built together. Certain developments may only be allowed as part of a joint application as, if built separately, they would damage the appearance or amenity of the adjoining property.

There is a presumption against two storey extensions, however in a few situations, where they have little or no impact on neighbouring houses, will not alter the symmetry of a block and are well integrated into the original house design, they have been allowed.

In some situations, a small side extension may be acceptable. The following points should be considered:

- It should be sited towards the rear of the side wall and well away from the boundary so that the existing hedge is not damaged or there is room left for restitution of a missing hedged boundary.
- It is not suitable to place an extension on a side wall that has the main entrance door of the house on it.
- A side extension should not adjoin a rear extension on the corner of the same house so as to form a “wrap-around” building that covers the original corner junction between the rear and side of a house. There should be sufficient distance between a rear wall and a side extension, so the corner of house is not crowded.
- A side extension that fills in part of the side return between two outriggers will only be considered where there is a joint application from both houses so that the two extensions are built within the same time frame for planning approval. This is to avoid creating a less open outlook for the undeveloped house as a fairly open amenity was part of the original planning for Brentham houses.

Check List of Architectural Details for Extension Design:

- Materials should match the main house design.
- Brick bond and render should match the main house.
- Roof slope pitch should match the main house.
- Eaves details should match the main house.
- Steps and plinths should match those of the original house.
- Chimney breasts that are an important feature of the house design should not be lost.
- Windows should match the original house. Their size should be no larger than the largest on the same floor of the original elevation. There should be a similar proportion of wall to window that is on the original elevation.
- Doors should match the original rear doors or, if French doors, they should reflect the original French doors in the right architectural group or harmonize with the original windows.