

NEW ASH GREEN  
extensions and alterations

## *Introduction*

The founders of New Ash Green laid down a constitution which sought to ensure that the high quality of its environmental design would be maintained into the future for the benefit of all residents.

If you are a householder in the village, you will therefore have signed a legally binding **Covenant** that you will not alter the external appearance of your property without first obtaining the written consent of the Village Association.

Such Covenants also apply to Residents' Societies and, indeed, the Village Association itself, regarding buildings and landscape under their control.

The Village Association considers applications through the recommendations of its Amenity Committee.

The Committee consists mainly of Architects and other building professionals and meets on pre-set dates approximately every six weeks. The dates of meetings can be obtained from the VA office and any application should be lodged with the office two weeks before a meeting.

The Committee members, who give their time free of charge to the village and its residents, also give design guidance surgeries on the first Saturday of each month at the VA office, from 10.30am to 12.00 noon.

These notes are given to assist you in considering your application, but a visit to Design Guidance at the earliest stage will only be beneficial and may avoid disappointment.

### *1. The Village Association Approval*

You will need to get VA approval for any changes to the external appearance of your property, even if, for example, you are replacing windows with "like for like".

This approval is separate from any Town Planning or Building Regulations Approvals you need from the Local Authorities.

You should have approval before any work is started. In some cases, retrospective approval has been given to completed work, but the criteria for such approvals are the same as for pre-constructive applications, and the fact of an alteration's existence will not bear upon the approval.

Construction without approval can prove expensive particularly at the time of sale, if a "Breach of Covenant" notice is placed in the VA property file and shows during a conveyance.

The VA also has the legal power to enforce the correction of a Breach of Covenant before resale.

There have been instances where builders or suppliers have assured householders that they know the village rules and they will comply, without application being necessary and this has not been true.

Neither should you take your neighbour's works, or any other precedent, for granted. You may be looking at replacement doors and windows which do not have approval.

A quick 'phone call to the VA can save a lot of time and money.

### ***Why should I need approval?***

Because when you buy a house in the village your deed includes a pledge on your part (in legal terms it's called a covenant - see Appendix 1 on Page 14) to fulfil certain commitments, including seeking approval for extensions and alterations to your home.

### ***What exactly do I need approval for?***

You will need written approval from the VA for any alteration you wish to make to the external appearance of your house or garage, to the fences or garden walls and also if you want to put up any other structure - a shed or greenhouse, for example - on your land. You will also need approval if any VA amenity land (i.e. land 'enjoyed' by everyone in the village) will be affected by your extension or the movement of existing services (e.g. drains) to accommodate your extension.

### ***What do I need to show the VA for approval?***

It depends on the extent of your proposals, but basically, You will need to supply plans, specifications, details of materials and finishes, etc. You will find full details in Appendix 2 on Page 15 of these guidelines.

### ***How often does the VA consider applications?***

The Amenity Committee meets eight times a year to consider applications. You will hear the results as soon as their decision has been confirmed by the Council of Management. Barring any particular problem, you should expect to hear in about fourteen days after a Council of Management meeting. The VA will retain one copy of your proposals for reference, and to check that the finished work matches your application.

### *Is my Residents' Society involved?*

Yes. As a matter of courtesy, Residents' Societies are invited to comment on all applications for their neighbourhoods. More than one Residents' Society will become involved if a proposal at the edge of a neighbourhood also affects the residents of an adjoining one.

### *How can I speed things up?*

You can speed matters along by giving a copy of your application to the VA and your Residents' Society at the same time.

### *Do I need any other permissions?*

Depending on what you have in mind, you may need planning permission from the Local Authority and approval under Building Regulations. It's up to you to get these approvals.

### *Where can I find more information?*

You can contact the VA office on Mondays to Fridays between 9.30am and 4.00pm. Telephone 01474 872691.

### *Design Guidance*

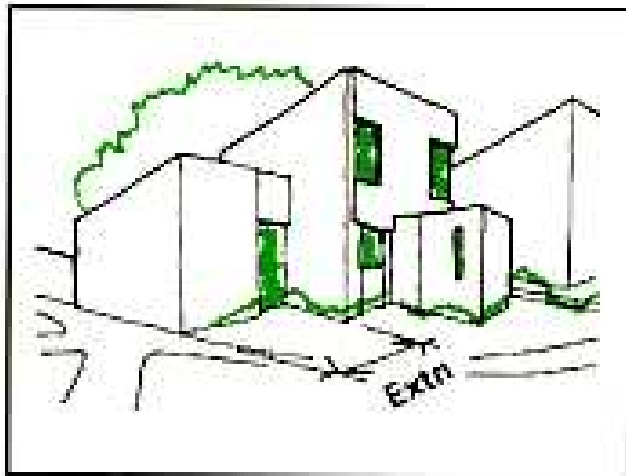
You can come along to the VA Office on the first Saturday of each month and talk informally with members of the Amenity Committee. These sessions start at 10.30am and go on until midday.

*It is best to talk to your neighbours and your Residents' Society about your proposals before submitting a formal application.*

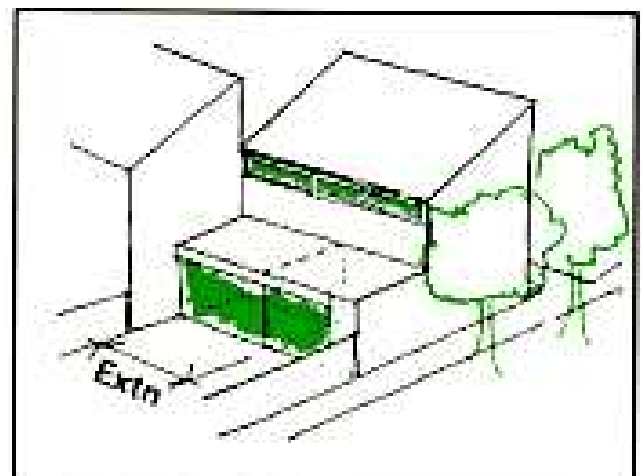
The impact of your proposals on your neighbours and your whole surroundings are taken into account in considering approval.

## *2. Extensions should respect the form and detailing of the original design*

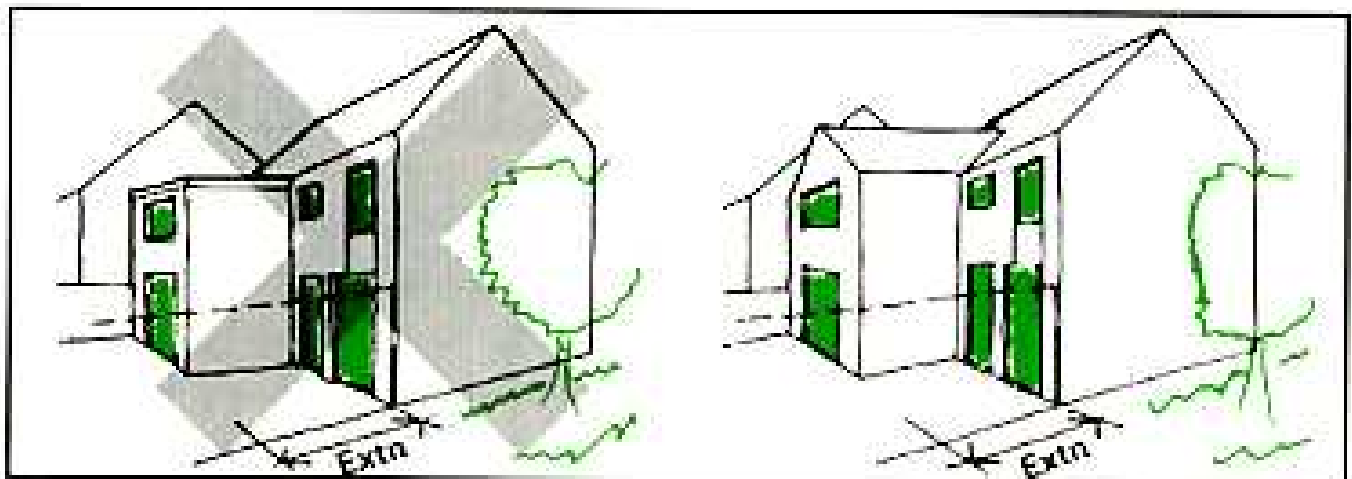
It is not possible to lay-down rules to good design - it is a matter of taste and judgement and to produce good design requires great skill. Care needs to be taken even with the smallest projects to ensure that the best possible results are obtained. Always employ an architect or designer whose work you have seen and admired. The following general points will however, be of assistance:-



*1. It is usually best if the roof of the extension follows the design of the original building.*



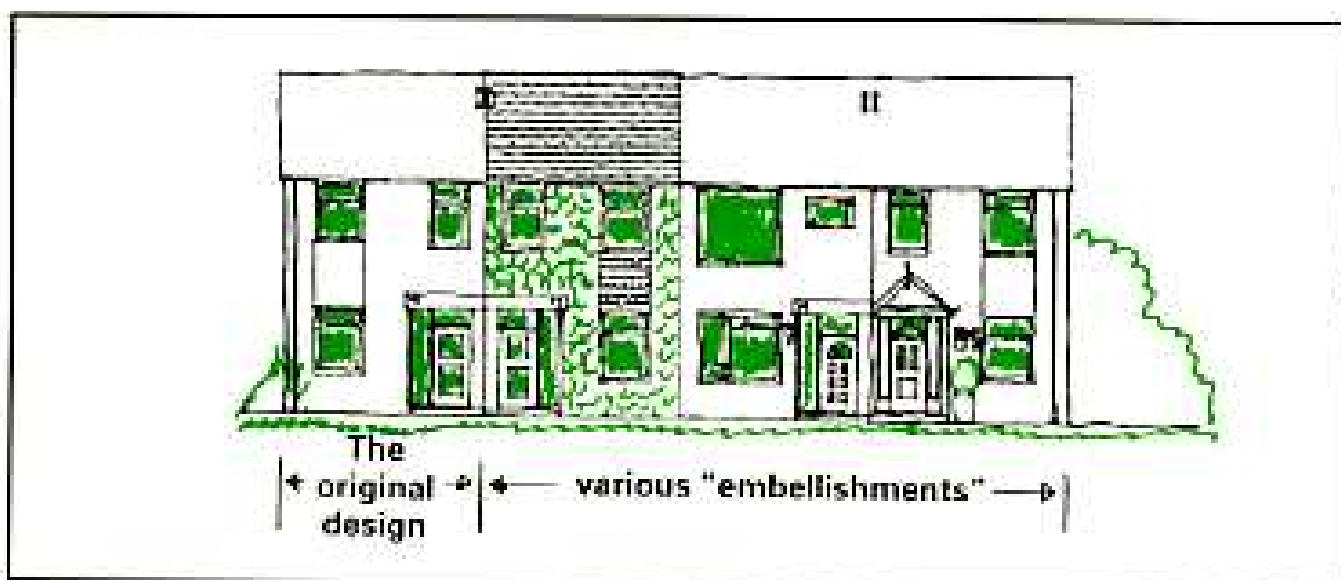
*2. Flat-roofed, single storey extensions are however, perfectly acceptable in certain situations.*



*3. A two storey, flat-roofed extension would not be acceptable in this situation.*

### 3. Alterations should not be made to the basic appearance of your house.

The replacement of existing windows and doors by those of a different type or design or a change in external finish can destroy the harmony of a whole terrace or group. This could also lead to a reduction in property values.



The replacement of timber door and windows will normally be permitted provided:

- 1) The size of the external opening is not altered.
- 2) The design of the window or door and location of opening lights remains the same.
- 3) Frame sections are to the same dimensions as the original items.
- 4) All materials are finished to match the neighbourhood colour scheme.

#### Materials

The village has always sought to match the materials of new extensions and alterations to those of the existing or original.

However, we do have to acknowledge the advances in technology and in the lower maintenance benefits of new materials.

The benefits of white upvc or coated metal double glazed windows and doors are recognised and have been allowed, but the need to retain overall harmony of the row, block or whole neighbourhood is paramount and permissions have been given in conjunction with consideration of neighbourhood colour schemes.

Similarly there are benefits in replacing painted timber cladding with upvc and where appropriate, permissions have been given, but only on a whole block basis. For example, the replacement of garage fascias on the car courts in a whole neighbourhood.

Permission would not be given where only one house in a row wanted a change of materials and/or colour which would be in discord with its neighbours.

If in doubt, consult the VA in advance and do not be persuaded into buying replacement double glazing or plastic goods without taking these factors into account.

*NB The written consent of the Village Association will still be required for such proposals.*

### *3a. Replacement of doors and windows*

These notes are issued to provide further guidance as to the attitude taken by the Village Association when considering applications made for replacing existing doors and windows.

A written application must be made to the Village Association for approval of any changes proposed to the elevational treatment of any property within the Village.

Where applications are made for new doors and windows which are 'to match existing', approval is normally given. However, cases have occurred where the meaning of these words has not been clearly understood, either by the householder or the supplier, and the householder has had to face additional work and cost before the property can be sold. If you pass a copy of these notes to your supplier at the outset of the estimating process, it should avoid any confusion over what the Village Association requires.

The illustrations in this book relate to typical Span K2 type houses. There are many other house types with their own style of windows, but the principles remain the same.

Further advice about your own house may be obtained from the Village Association office, which will put you in contact with a member of the Amenity Committee. Alternatively, you can attend the Design Guidance sessions which take place in the VA office between 10.30am and noon on the first Saturday of each month.

Change to appearance is not universally ruled out. The Association would not envisage this happening on a house by house basis, except in special circumstances, e.g. to accommodate the needs of someone who is disabled. Change throughout a neighbourhood on a block by block basis is possible, but this will require an approach by a group of residents acting together and is normally best dealt with through your Residents' Society.

Please note that in the case of ground floor rear garden elevations, which are not extensively overlooked, a change in design, such as to install patio doors, can often be permitted, but you will still need to apply in advance for consent.

NOTE - The illustrations on P. 9 & 10 are for Span type window and door, but the same principles apply to all types.

### *3b. General requirements*

#### *a) Colour*

The colour of any new units should always match the rest of the agreed colour of the neighbourhood. Where hardwood sub-frames or surrounds are introduced and none existed previously, this would produce an unacceptable colour change.

*Note: A hardwood sub-frame is the piece of wood between the (normally white) window section and the opening in the structure.*

#### *b) Material*

Most replacements involve a change from timber to coated metal or UPVC. Some manufacturers have difficulty in achieving the wider opening light windows in their standard sections. Our experience is that plastic coated metal is more likely to achieve these wider spans without resorting to heavier sections, as found with UPVC.

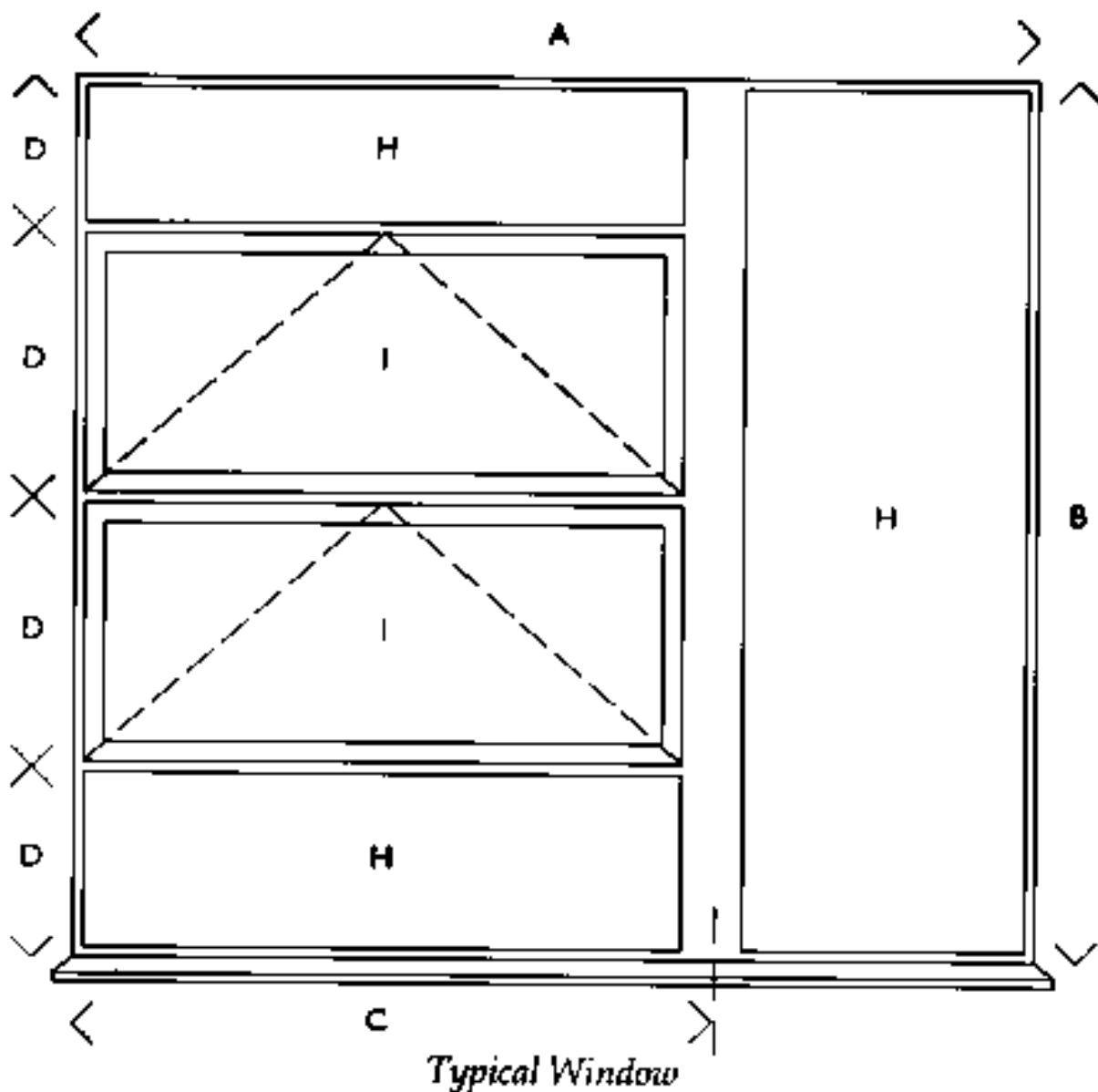
#### *c) Glass*

Manufacturers should always supply safety glass to doors and windows in accordance with the requirements of the building regulations. Tinted or 'mirror' glass is not generally approved. Where obscured glass is to be used it should be plain obscured, not fluted or patterned.

## Windows

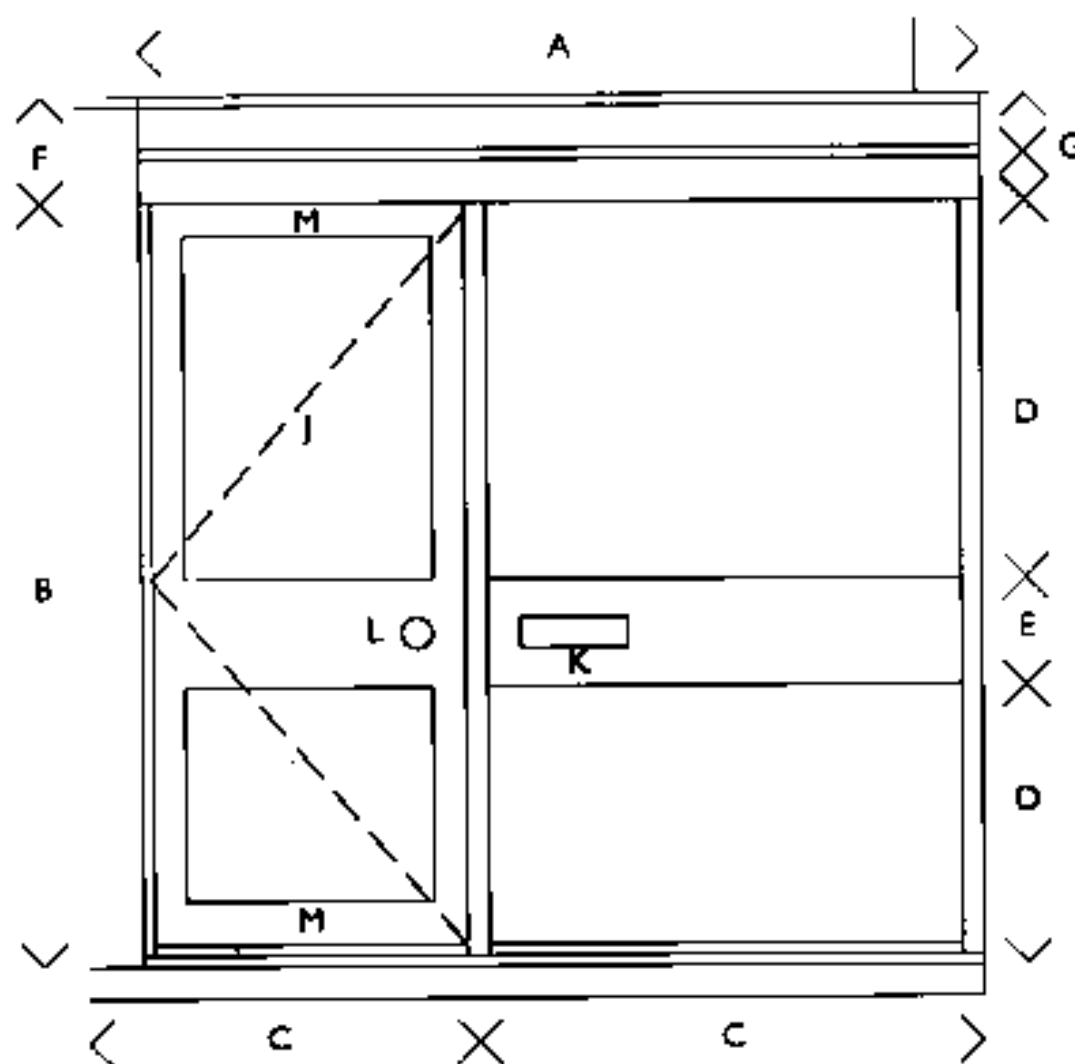
- A.B. The overall width and height of the opening must be maintained.
- C.D. The location of all mullions (vertical divisions) and transoms (horizontal divisions) should be to exactly the same centre line dimensions as in the original window.
- H. The fixed lights (the non-opening areas of the window) should remain as original.
- I. The opening lights should remain as original. The opening mechanism however may change (pivot instead of top hinged for example) providing the expression of two frames, one within the other, is maintained.

*Note: The face dimensions and the depth of all window sections whether for opening or fixed lights should be as close as possible to the dimensions that exist.*



## *Doors and entrance screens*

- A.B. The overall width and height of the opening must be maintained.
- C.D. The centre line dimensions of all members (mullions and transoms, frames, post and rails) must be maintained.
- E. The depth of the centre rail in any doors and screens must remain the same. In some cases it may be necessary to have a blank panel between two cross members to achieve this. Any gaskets used in joints should be white not black.
- F.G. In many cases the entrance screen will incorporate a boarded fascia over. The height of the fascia and the size and profile of the boards must be maintained.
- J. Doors should remain opening the same way (generally opening in for front doors, out for back).
- K. The size and location of letter boxes should remain the same.
- L. All ironmongery, bells, etc. should be the same finish as existing or white to match the door.
- M. The dimensions of the door frame (head sill and jambs) should be the same as original.



*Typical Front Door and Screen*

#### *4. Materials used for alterations and additions should match the original building*

1. If possible, use the same make of bricks, roof tiles or slates for new work as those used in the construction of your house. A schedule of materials used by the developers of New Ash Green is available for inspection at the offices of the Village Association.
2. Stained timber boarding should be rough sawn or planed, as the original, and to be the same sections, profiles and width between joints.
3. New rainwater goods should match the design and colour of the original.
4. New work should be finished to comply with the neighbourhood's approved colour scheme.
5. Please refer to Section 3 for comments on the use of alternative materials for door and window frames.

#### *5. Conservatories*

Conservatories may be purpose built or to a manufacturer's design. Many designs are now available but the one chosen should be in sympathy with the character of the house and the materials of construction should match those of the house.

The form should be simple and not embellished. 'Victorian' type detailing with, for example, ornamental roof ridge decoration or stained glass inserts should be avoided. Care must be taken over detailing where the conservatory joins the existing building.

##### *Submission of applications for conservatories*

Applications for conservatories should specify dimensions, materials and finishes to be used and be accompanied by full drawings. These should include the location of the house, the exact siting of the conservatory in relation to the existing property and adjacent properties with a plan and elevations. They should also show any modifications to, or new means of, rainwater disposal.

Where a proprietary manufacturer is involved, a brochure or leaflet accurately showing the proposal should also be included.

## Conservatories

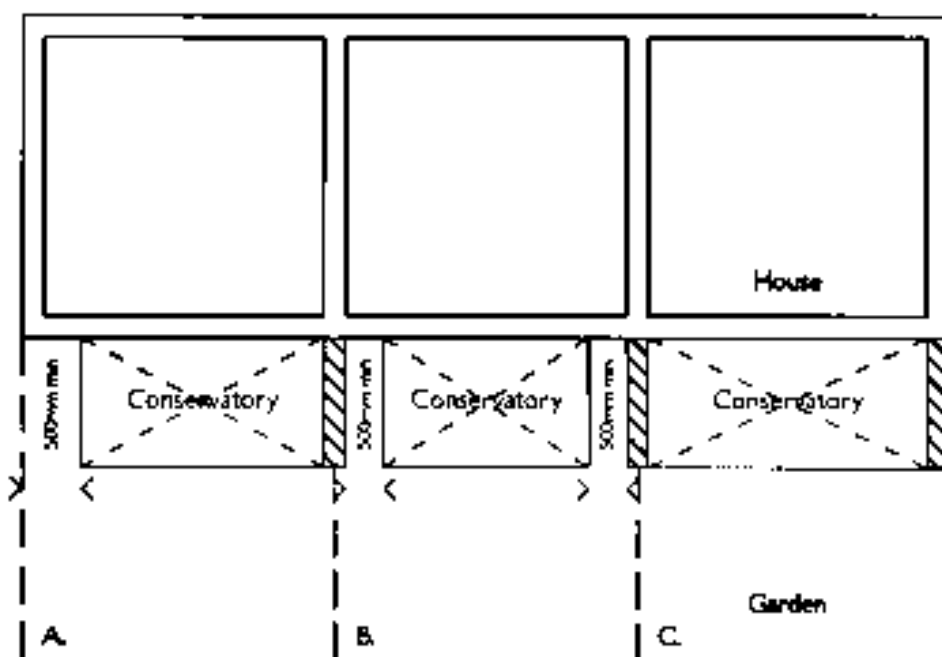
To be read with Paragraph 5 Page 11

Garden conservatories are to be located so that the flank (side) walls are a **minimum of 500mm** from the boundary fences or walls, or so that one or both flank walls are formed by a full height brick extension of the party or gable wall.

Examples of typical arrangements are shown as A, B and C below

*Note. A party wall is one separating you from your neighbour where the ownership boundary runs down the centre line.*

If you wish to extend a party wall you must obtain the prior approval of your neighbour.



## *6. Garden sheds, greenhouses, fences and other garden structures*

All applications conforming to the following guidelines may be determined by the Residents' Society. Such applications **must** be made and written approval received **prior** to work commencing. Residents' Societies are required to notify the Amenity Committee of all such approvals granted. Any application **not** conforming to the following guidelines must be determined by the Amenity Committee.

### *a) Sheds*

Maximum size to be 2.4m x 1.8m x 1.95m high to eaves and 2.4m high to roof ridge (8' x 6' x 6'6" and 8' respectively). The standard finish to be natural wood, stain or colour to comply with the neighbourhood colour scheme. The roof should be dark grey or green mineralised felt.

A location plan and details of the proposals must be submitted as part of any application for the erection of garden sheds or similar structures to show that the effect on the house and adjoining houses has been taken into account.

### *b) Greenhouses*

Those up to 5 sq.m. (50 sq.ft) of proprietary manufacture, may be approved by the Residents' Society. All greenhouses attached to houses must be determined by the Amenity Committee. A location plan and details must be submitted with all applications.

### *c) Fences*

Not to exceed 1.8m (6') in height. To be finished in natural wood, stain or colour; type to match existing and to comply with the neighbourhood colour scheme.

## *Appendix 1 - Restrictive covenants*

1. No part of the premises except the garage shall be let separately from the whole or used otherwise than for the purposes of a private dwelling.
2. No sign or advertisement shall be displayed on the premises so as to be visible from outside the premises except that a name plate not exceeding 4 square inches may be displayed at an entrance.
3. No alteration shall be made to the external appearance of a house or the premises (including the colour scheme) except with the prior written consent of the Association.
4. No alteration shall be made to the gardens walls or fences on the premises except with the prior written consent of the Association.
5. No building or other structure shall be erected in the curtilage of the premises except with the prior written consent of the Association.
6. No exterior aerial shall be erected on the premises and no person shall be permitted to interfere with any television rediffusion equipment on the premises.
7. No car, caravan or similar vehicle shall be parked in the curtilage of the premises otherwise than in a garage or (in the case of a private car not standing higher at any point than 5 feet 6 inches above ground and not bearing any sign or advertisement) on a driveway leading to a garage.
8. Nothing shall be done or omitted to be done on the premises that may interfere with the amenity of other property owners or occupiers on the estate.

*The above is an extract from the Deeds of your house.*

## *Appendix 2 - Requirements for applications*

All applications to the Village Association should be accompanied by a site plan indicating the relationship of the proposals to neighbouring properties (suggested scale 1 : 1250).

In addition:

- i) Applications for approval of replacement windows and/or doors should show separately the elevations as existing and any proposed alterations (suggested scale 1 : 50).
- ii) Applications for extensions should be accompanied by full plans and elevations indicating all the materials to be used.
- iii) Applications for conservatories should specify dimensions, materials and finishes to be used and be accompanied either by full plans and elevations or by a clear illustration of the proposals together with a site plan.
- iv) Applications to alter planted areas for which the Residents' Societies are responsible, should be accompanied by a plan of the affected area and its surroundings (suggested scale 1 : 100 or 1 : 50).
- v) Applications for garden sheds or fences should specify dimensions, materials and finishes to be used.

## *Appendix 3 - Residents' Society obligations*

In certain circumstances an extension/conservatory could make it more expensive for your Residents' Society to fulfil its maintenance obligations. The following provisions will therefore apply where conservatories are to be attached to houses, or where drains serving other properties run under land where an extension is proposed.

- i) Acceptance by the resident of the responsibility for the future external redecoration of the property where access is affected.
- ii) Wherever possible, extensions and conservatories should not be built over existing drains serving other properties.

If however, in exceptional circumstances consent is granted for a new extension/construction to be built over existing drainage within the applicant/owner's boundary, then it will be necessary for the resident to enter into a legal agreement with the Village Association and Residents' Society of the responsibility of additional maintenance or repair costs arising due to the erection of a construction/extension.

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