

PRE PLANNING GUIDE EXTENSION/ INDEPENDENT LIVING UNITS :

This document is intended to provide a guide to those wishing to extend an existing house or provide an independent living unit. It is not intended to be a complete and legal interpretation of all policies of the Council as set out in the County Development Plan or of the Planning Acts and associated Regulations. Applicants should always seek the advice of a suitably qualified professional in the preparation of any planning application.

The County Development Plan 2016-2022 may be obtained or viewed from any office of Wicklow County Council or on the Council website
www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Development-Plans-Strategies

In addition Local Area Plans for Bray (including Enniskerry/ Kilmacanogue), Wicklow-Rathnew, Blessington, Arklow, Newtownmountkennedy, Greystones/Delgany and Kilcoole are also available to view online at the same address.

House extensions - Urban

The construction of extensions to existing houses will be encouraged generally as it usually provides a less resource intensive method of expanding living space than building a new structure. Given the range of site layouts prevailing, it is not possible to set out a set of 'rules' that can be applied to all extensions, but the following basic principles shall be applied:

- The extension should be sensitive to the existing dwelling and should not adversely distort the scale or mass of the structure;
- The extension shall not provide for new overlooking of the private area of an adjacent residence where no such overlooking previously existed;
- In an existing developed area, where a degree of overlooking is already present, the new extension must not significantly increase overlooking possibilities. If for example a two-story dwelling already directly overlooks a neighbour's rear garden, a third storey extension with the same view will normally be considered acceptable;
- New extensions should not overshadow adjacent dwellings to the degree that a significant decrease in day or sunlight entering into the house comes about. In this regard, extensions directly abutting property boundaries should be avoided;
- While the form, size and appearance of an extension should complement the area, unless the area has an established unique or valuable character worthy of preservation, a flexible approach will be taken to the assessment of alternative design concepts.

Note : Any assessment of loss of daylight/ sunlight should be undertaken in accordance with the document ' Site layout planning for Daylight and Sunlight' : A Guide to Good Practice (2nd Edition) Paul Littlefair BRE

House Extensions Rural

In respect of house Extension in rural areas cognisance should be taken of the Design Guide for Rural Housing : Appendix 2 of the County Development Plan 2016-2022, which is available to view online at <https://www.wicklow.ie/Living/Services/Planning/Development-Plans-Strategies/National-Regional-County-Plans/Wicklow-County-Development-Plan>. In particular the following extract

EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING RURAL HOUSES

The design of an extension should be sympathetic to the existing house. This does not mean that it has to exactly match the existing style, height and finishes, but that it should complement the existing house and not look out of place.

A good extension is usually subservient to the main building i.e. extensions should be designed so that they look like extensions rather than a new house 'attached' to an old house. Extensions can reflect traditional aspects of the existing building, but contemporary extensions can also serve to complement the existing building.

There are no hard and fast rules about the size of an extension, but it will be necessary to ensure that:

- The extension respects the size of the existing house;
- The extension does not reduce the area of the garden to such a degree that it affects the usefulness of the garden;
- The site is big enough to accommodate the extension as well as all the other facilities that a house requires e.g. effluent disposal system, car-parking area etc.



Contemporary extensions to rural cottages in County Wicklow.

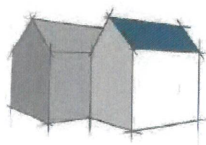


Use of a different material on the extension breaks up dwelling mass.

EXTENSION SHAPE EXAMPLES



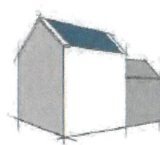
Examples of some of the preferred extension shapes. They should not dominate the existing structure. Avoid flat roofed extensions unless a contemporary approach has been designed by a professional.



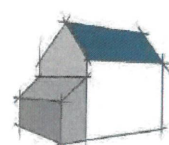
Doubled and slipped



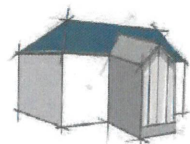
Valley roof



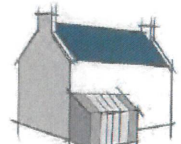
Long



Lean to



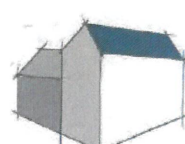
T rear extension



Rear lean to extension with large openings



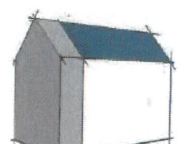
contemporary flat roof



Cross gabled



Extension linking to converted outbuilding



Long extension



L shape pitched roof

* ■ = Extension

Independent living units ('Granny-flats')

A 'granny flat' or 'independent living unit' is a separate living unit on an existing house site, used to accommodate a member of the immediate family, often an elderly parent, for a temporary period. The construction or conversion of part of an existing dwelling into a 'family flat' will only be permitted where the development complies with the following requirements:

- The need for the unit has been justified and is for the use of a close family member;
 - The unit forms an integrated part of the structure of the main house – in exceptional circumstances, the conversion of an existing detached garage / store etc may be considered subject to the structure being in very close proximity to the main house;
 - The unit is modest in size and in particular, it shall not exceed 45sqm and shall not have more than 1 bedroom;
 - The unit shall not be sold or let as an independent living unit and the existing garden shall not be sub-divided;
 - The structure must be capable of being functionally re-integrated into the main house when its usefulness has ceased. Permission for such units shall be restricted to a period of 7 years, after which it must revert to a use ancillary to the main house (e.g. garage, store, hobby room) unless permission has been secured for its continuation as an independent unit for another period.

Services

- For planning applications for extensions to a dwelling with an existing wastewater treatment system the Council will generally require the wastewater treatment system to be upgraded to comply with the Code of Practice EPA 2009 in each of the following individual circumstances:
 - i. The proposed Gross Floor Area of the extension is in excess of 33% of the GFA of the existing dwelling.
 - ii. The number of bedrooms is being increased by > 50%.
 - iii. The existing dwelling is semi-derelict.
 - iv. The existing wastewater treatment system at the date of application would not comply with the previous codes of practice NSAI SR6 1991 or Wastewater Treatment Manuals Treatment Systems for Single Houses EPA 2000.

Where circumstances (i) to (iv) above do not apply the Planning Authority may still require the upgrading of wastewater treatment systems in particular circumstances in the interests of public health. The upgrading of a system prior to or during the course of an application for an extension to an existing dwelling to meet the provisions of SR6 : 1991 or the EPA Manual 2000 is unacceptable and only upgrading to the current standards will be permissible.

- If the house is served by a main sewer / watermain, you should clearly show the location of this main on any drawings. Permission will not be considered for extensions on top of public mains, or within a certain distance of one. You should seek the advice of your architect with regard to separation distances required

Entrances

- It will be necessary in any application to provide full details of the existing entrance serving the house.
- If the extension is of such a size that it may generate additional traffic movement or the entrance does not currently meet safety standards (e.g. with regard to sightlines), you may be requested to submit proposals to improve the entrance