

7. alterations and extensions



Two storey rear extension to house at Edensor. Note date stone: 1966

Alterations

7.1 The improvement or renovation of an existing property is generally preferable, both on cost and visual grounds, to redeveloping the site afresh. It is often also the more sustainable option. An old building will have features and detailing that cannot be rebuilt today.

7.2 Alterations need to be undertaken with care. Insensitive changes can easily spoil a building. The key to a sensitive approach is to take note of what is there already before preparing the design and to work with and not against the building's character (accurate survey drawings are essential in this respect). The aim should be to revitalise the building without altering its fundamental character.

7.3 Certain alterations may require planning permission depending on the extent and nature of the works (for advice on this see the National Park's Planning Guidance Notes¹⁷).

ENHANCEMENT



House in Winster from 1960s, out of keeping with its setting



Subsequently refronted with openings reconfigured



New garden walls and relocated bus shelter help to restore the street frontage



Old Post Office, Alstonefield. Altering the door into a window is preferable to creating a new opening. Irreversibly changing the door opening should be avoided

Existing Openings

7.4 It is best to use existing openings to the full, if necessary rearranging the functions of the rooms to suit, before considering their alteration. If there is sufficient wall area it is always best to add a new opening rather than alter an existing one.

7.5 If a window opening has to be enlarged it is best to lower the sill rather than to increase the opening's width. Where new openings are to be added, the detailing of the door or window and of any masonry surround should be copied or take their cue from what is already there.

7.6 Widespread window and door replacement from the 1960s onwards has tended to result in inappropriate alterations to the area's buildings. When investing in new doors and windows, every effort should be made to return such openings to a design more in keeping with the age of the building. This will enhance both the property and the area.

Improvements to Non-traditional Houses

7.7 The post-war building boom of the 1950s and 1960s resulted in houses being built in the National Park which are neither of traditional or good modern design. If alterations or extensions are being considered then this is a chance to improve their appearance and enhance the area. Even something as simple as painting a prominent fascia or barge board in a dark, neutral colour will be a considerable enhancement.

Extensions

7.8 All extensions should harmonise with the parent building. An extension should respect the dominance of the original building and be subordinate to it in terms of its size and massing. Setting back the new section from the building line and keeping the eaves and ridge lower than the parent building will help.

7.9 It may be possible to add a well designed extension in a modern style provided it is in harmony with the original building and does not diminish its quality or integrity.

7.10 The smaller the parent building, the fewer the options for extension. A two storey rear extension to a small cottage is unlikely to be acceptable, even on the rear. A single storey toll house is even more constrained and any extension would probably need to be flat roofed and concealed behind a high wall in order to retain the apparent minimal nature of the accommodation.

7.11 Irrespective of size however; all buildings can reach a threshold point beyond which further extension is just not possible without destroying their character. A large house can all too easily begin to look like a terrace of houses if it is extended too far from either gable.

7.12 The Authority's policies accept extensions provided they do not harm the character of the building or amenity of the area. Extensions limited to less than 25% of the original building are more likely to be approved.



Side extension, Stanton in Peak



Modern extension, Alsop-en-le-Dale



New ground floor extension, Ashford



Modern extension, Ashford in the Water

Porches

7.13 Porches must be appropriate to the property and well designed. They rarely look right on small cottages and often spoil terraced properties. They detract from the basic simplicity of such buildings. In these cases, an internal porch is the better solution.



New lightweight porch, Youlgreave



New conservatory, Great Longstone



New garage designed as outbuilding, Alstonefield



New garages beneath raised garden, Over Haddon

Garages

7.14 These need to be designed and built in sympathy with the properties they serve. Materials and roof pitch should generally match those of the parent building. If attached to the building, the new garage should be clearly subordinate. A separate garage building is however often the better solution particularly where more than one garage is needed. Here it is best to relate the form to that of traditional outbuildings, the nearest example being the cart shed, with its openings on the building's long axis beneath the front eaves. Another approach is to minimise the garage's obtrusiveness even further by considering an underground solution.

Conservatories

7.15 Historically, these only occurred on larger houses from later architectural periods. They are out of keeping on small cottages or houses dating from before the mid 18th century. Garden rooms are generally an alien feature being neither visually transparent nor traditionally solid. Upvc should not be used as a material on conservatories.

7.16 For more discussion of these topics please refer to the *Detailed Design Guidance Note: Alterations and Extensions*.