

Camden Planning Guidance

Design

London Borough of Camden

CPG **1**



July 2015

CPG1 Design

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1 Introduction

What is Camden Planning Guidance?

- 1.1 We have prepared this Camden Planning Guidance to support the policies in our Local Development Framework (LDF). This guidance is therefore consistent with the Core Strategy and the Development Policies, and forms a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which is an additional “material consideration” in planning decisions. The Council adopted CPG1 Design on 6 April 2011 following statutory consultation. This document was updated in 2013 to include Section 12 on artworks, statues and memorials, and updated in 2015 to revise the guidance for recycling and waste storage. Details on these updates and the consultation process are available at camden.gov.uk/cpg.
- 1.2 The Camden Planning Guidance covers a range of topics (such as housing, sustainability, amenity and planning obligations) and so all of the sections should be read in conjunction, and within the context of Camden’s LDF.

Design in Camden

- 1.3 Camden has many attractive and historic neighbourhoods as well as both traditional and modern buildings of the highest quality. These are a significant reason that the borough is such a popular place to live, work and visit. As well as conserving our rich heritage we should also contribute towards it by ensuring that we create equally high quality buildings and spaces which will be appreciated by future generations.
- 1.4 This objective of achieving high quality design does not just concern new development or large-scale schemes, but also includes the replacement, extension or conversion of existing buildings. The detailed guidance contained within this section therefore considers a range of design-related issues for both residential and commercial property and the spaces around them.



What does this guidance cover?

- 1.5 This guidance provides information on all types of detailed design issues within the borough and includes the following sections:
1. Introduction
 2. Design excellence
 3. Heritage
 4. Extensions, alterations and conservatories
 5. Roofs, terraces and balconies
 6. Landscape design and trees
 7. Shopfronts
 8. Advertisements, signs and hoardings
 9. Designing safer environments
 10. Waste recyclables storage
 11. Building services equipment
 12. Artworks, statues and memorials
- 1.6 This guidance supports the following Local Development Framework policies:
- Core Strategy**
- CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage
 - CS15 Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces & encouraging biodiversity
 - CS17 Making Camden a safer place
 - CS18 Dealing with our waste and encouraging recycling
- Development Policies**
- DP24 Securing high quality design
 - DP25 Conserving Camden's heritage
 - DP27 Basements and lightwells
 - DP29 Improving access
 - DP30 Shopfronts
- 1.7 It should be noted that the guidance covered in this section only forms part of the range of considerations that you should address when proposing new development. In addition to these specific design matters you should also consider wider issues such as cycle storage, residential space standards, wheelchair housing, designing in sustainability measures and impacts on neighbours. Further guidance on these, and other issues, is contained within the Local Development Framework documents and the Camden Planning Guidance.

4 Extensions, alterations and conservatories

KEY MESSAGES

- Alterations should always take into account the character and design of the property and its surroundings.
- Windows, doors and materials should complement the existing building.
- Rear extensions should be secondary to the building being extended.
- You can make certain types of minor alterations without planning permission (see below) external alterations.

4.1 This guidance provides advice to those seeking to alter or extend a residential property, including the erection of conservatories. The principles of this guidance also apply to extensions and alterations to other types of property. It expects high quality design that respects and enhances the character and appearance of a property and its surroundings, and also covers matters such as outlook, privacy and overlooking.

4.2 This guidance relates to Core Strategy Policy CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage and Development Policies DP24 Securing high quality design.

When does this apply?

4.3 This guidance applies to all proposals for alterations and extensions to residential properties, although some aspects will be relevant to alterations and extensions to other types of buildings.

4.4 You can make certain types of minor changes to your property without needing to apply for planning permission. These are called "permitted development rights", and further details can be found on the planning portal website www.planningportal.gov.uk or by contacting the Council. In some conservation areas, Article 4 directions have been introduced which have removed certain permitted development rights. Details of Article 4 Directions, including where they apply in Camden can be found in the Conservation and Urban Design section of our website www.camden.gov.uk.

4.5 In addition to this guidance, you should also make reference to chapters on Heritage, Design excellence and Roofs, Terraces and balconies, in this CPG. If your property is situated within a conservation area then you should also refer to the relevant Conservation Area Statement, Appraisal or Management Plan, which sets out detailed guidelines for development in a particular area. Many of these are available on our website.

Guidance for all extensions and alterations

External alterations

- 4.6 The good practice principles set out below and the general design considerations for residential façades shown in Figure 1 – ‘Alterations to Residential Façades’ should be followed when undertaking external alterations. A façade is the front or face of a building.

Good practice principles for external alterations

- 4.7 Alterations should always take into account the character and design of the property and its surroundings. A harmonious contrast with the existing property and surroundings may be appropriate for some new work to distinguish it from the existing building; in other cases closely matching materials and design details are more appropriate so as to ensure the new work blends with the old.

Windows

- Where it is necessary to alter or replace windows that are original or in the style of the originals, they should be replaced like with like wherever possible in order to preserve the character of the property and the surrounding area. New windows should match the originals as closely as possible in terms of type, glazing patterns and proportions (including the shape, size and placement of glazing bars), opening method, materials and finishes, detailing and the overall size of the window opening.
- Where timber is the traditional window material, replacements should also be in timber frames. uPVC windows are not acceptable both aesthetically and for environmental reasons, including their relatively short lifespan and inability to biodegrade. Similarly, where steel is the traditional window material, steel replacements will be sought wherever possible, see also CPG3 Sustainability (Sustainable use of materials chapter), which gives guidance on the use of sustainable materials).
- Reference should be made to the Building Research Establishment's (BRE) Green Guide to Specification when sourcing replacement window frames.
- Where the original glazing bars are highly detailed and intricate, or contain stained glass or leaded panes these should be retained and repaired. See also the Camden leaflet *A Guide to Windows (2006)*, which is available on our website, for advice on secondary glazing and other ways to improve energy efficiency while retaining attractive original features.
- Where windows are replaced they should have the lowest 'U-value' feasible.
- Listed building consent will be required for replacement windows, secondary glazing and double-glazing in listed buildings.
- In conservation areas original single-glazed windows often contribute to the character and appearance of the area, and should be retained

and upgraded. There may however be some instances where double-glazing can be installed in a design that matches the original, for instance sash windows or casements with large individual pane sizes, or in secondary glazing. In such cases, the window frame and glazing bars of the replacement windows should match the existing.

- Further guidance on window alterations and the effect that this can have on energy efficiency and protecting heritage assets can be found on English Heritage's 'Climate Change and your Home' website: www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk

Doors

- Where you are looking to replace doors their design should match the dimensions, proportions, joinery details, panelling and glazing of the original. Where timber replacement doors are proposed the timber should be sustainably sourced.
- Characteristic doorway features, such as porches, such be retained where they make a positive contribution to the character of groups of buildings.

Materials

- Wherever possible you should use materials that complement the colour and texture of the materials in the existing building, see also CPG3 Sustainability (Sustainable use of materials chapter). In historic areas traditional materials such as brick, stone, timber and render will usually be the most appropriate complement to the existing historic fabric; modern materials such as steel and glass may be appropriate but should be used sensitively and not dominate the existing property.
- Materials for alterations should weather well, so their ageing process contributes positively to the character of the building, and the site's wider context.
- Original surface finishes should be retained or replicated wherever possible, as they are usually central to the architectural design / character treatment of a building. These may cover the entire building or façade (such as stucco facing), the roof elements (such as roof tiles and roof ridges), highlight specific features (such as windows or doors) or act as decorative elements (such as ironwork or terracotta panels).
- When repairing existing wall finishes, the composition of the original material (such as plaster, stucco or render) should be determined, the defective area cut out and a replacement material of identical chemical composition applied and properly bonded. Concrete repairs are generally non-original and unsympathetic to historic buildings, and can damage bricks, and should be replaced with a more traditional lime-based finish.
- The insulating quality of materials should be considered, along with their embodied energy (the energy used in manufacture) and the potential for re-use and recycling.

- Alterations or repairs to brickwork or stonework should match the original in all respects while satisfying the needs of durability and maintenance. This should include matching the original bond, mortar colour and texture. Retention of any existing pointing is encouraged wherever possible.
- Samples of brick type and mortar colour will normally be required to be submitted to the Council as part of any application.
- Painting, rendering or cladding of brickwork will normally be resisted, as it is often unsightly and can damage the appearance of a building by obscuring the texture and original colour of the façade. Painting, rendering or cladding may also trap moisture, which can cause major damp problems in the masonry.

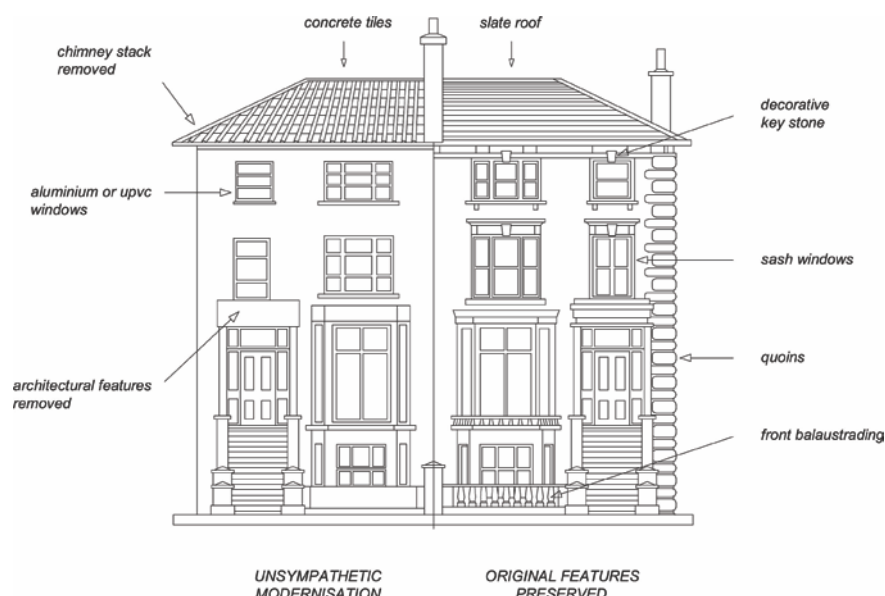
External pipework

- Original external pipework and guttering should be repaired or reinstated in a like-for-like manner, where possible. In the case of historic buildings, cast iron replicas of original pipework are preferable to uPVC pipes. New pipework should be restricted to the side and rear elevations of buildings to avoid spoiling the appearance of the principal façade and should be grouped together and located in a discrete position.

Scale

- 4.8 Extensions should be subordinate to the original building in terms of scale and situation unless the specific circumstances of the site, such as the context of the property or its particular design, would enable an exception to this approach. More detailed guidance on design considerations is contained within CPG1 Design (Design excellence chapter).

Figure 2. Alterations to residential facades



Rear extensions

- 4.9 A rear extension is often the most appropriate way to extend a house or property. However, rear extensions that are insensitively or inappropriately designed can spoil the appearance of a property or group of properties and harm the amenity of neighbouring properties, for example in terms of outlook and access to daylight and sunlight.

General principles

- 4.10 Rear extensions should be designed to:
- be secondary to the building being extended, in terms of location, form, scale, proportions, dimensions and detailing;
 - respect and preserve the original design and proportions of the building, including its architectural period and style;
 - respect and preserve existing architectural features, such as projecting bays, decorative balconies or chimney stacks;
 - respect and preserve the historic pattern and established townscape of the surrounding area, including the ratio of built to unbuilt space;
 - not cause a loss of amenity to adjacent properties with regard to sunlight, daylight, outlook, overshadowing, light pollution/spillage, privacy/overlooking, and sense of enclosure;
 - allow for the retention of a reasonable sized garden; and
 - retain the open character of existing natural landscaping and garden amenity, including that of neighbouring properties, proportionate to that of the surrounding area.
- 4.11 Materials should be chosen that are sympathetic to the existing building wherever possible (see also CPG3 Sustainability on Sustainable use of materials).

Height of rear extensions

- 4.12 In order for new extensions to be subordinate to the original building, their heights should respect the existing pattern of rear extensions, where they exist. Ground floor extensions are generally considered preferable to those at higher levels. The maximum acceptable height of an extension should be determined in relation to the points outlined in paragraph 4.10 above. In cases where a higher extension is appropriate, a smaller footprint will generally be preferable to compensate for any increase in visual mass and bulk, overshadowing and overlooking that would be caused by the additional height.
- 4.13 In most cases, extensions that are higher than one full storey below roof eaves/parapet level, or that rise above the general height of neighbouring projections and nearby extensions, will be strongly discouraged.

Width of rear extensions

- 4.14 The width of rear extensions should be designed so that they are not visible from the street and should respect the rhythm of existing rear extensions.
- 4.15 In addition, the rear of some buildings may be architecturally distinguished, either forming a harmonious composition, or visually contributing to the townscape. The Council will seek to preserve these where appropriate. Some of the Borough's important rear elevations are identified in conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans.

Side extensions

- 4.16 Certain building forms may lend themselves to side extensions. Such extensions should be designed in accordance with the general considerations set out above in paragraph 4.10. Side extensions should also:
- be no taller than the porch; and
 - set back from the main building.
- 4.17 In many streets in the north of the Borough houses have mature rear gardens that can often be seen through gaps between buildings, softening the urban scene and providing visual interest. The infilling of gaps will not be considered acceptable where:
- significant views or gaps are compromised or blocked;
 - the established front building line is compromised;
 - the architectural symmetry or integrity of a composition is impaired;
 - the original architectural features on a side wall are obscured; or
 - access to the rear of a property is lost.
- 4.18 Where a property is located in a conservation area, reference should be made to the relevant conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans, which often identify important gaps and vistas where infilling would be inappropriate.

Figure 3. Side extensions

Conservatories

4.19 Conservatories should normally:

- be located adjacent to the side and rear elevations of the building;
- be subordinate to the building being extended in terms of height, mass, bulk, plan form and detailing;
- respect and preserve existing architectural features, e.g. brick arches, windows etc;
- be located at ground or basement level. Only in exceptional circumstances will conservatories be allowed on upper levels;
- not extend the full width of a building. If a conservatory fills a gap beside a solid extension, it must be set back from the building line of the solid extension; and
- be of a high quality in both materials and design.

4.20 Conservatories should not overlook or cause light pollution to neighbouring properties, including to those in flats above. In order to minimise overlooking, opaque lightweight materials such as obscured glass may be necessary on façades abutting neighbouring properties. Also, in order to minimise light pollution, solid lightweight materials, one-way glass or obscured glass may be required.

- 4.21 Further guidance is contained within CPG4 Protecting and improving quality of life (Light Pollution chapter).

Development in rear gardens and other open land

- 4.22 The construction of garden buildings, including sheds, stand-alone green houses and other structures in rear gardens and other undeveloped areas, can often have a significant impact upon the amenity, biodiversity and character of an area. They may detract from the generally soft and green nature of gardens and other open space, contributing to the loss of amenity for existing and future residents of the property.
- 4.23 Large garden buildings may also affect the amenity value of neighbours' gardens, and if used for purposes other than storage or gardening, may intensify the use of garden spaces.
- 4.24 Development in rear gardens should:
- ensure the siting, location, scale and design of the proposed development has a minimal visual impact on, and is visually subordinate to, the host garden
 - not detract from the open character and garden amenity of the neighbouring gardens and the wider surrounding area
 - use suitable soft landscaping to reduce the impact of the proposed development
 - ensure building heights will retain visibility over garden walls and fences
 - use materials which complement the host property and the overall character of the surrounding area. The construction method should minimise any impact on trees (also see Landscape design and trees chapter in this CPG), or adjacent structures
 - address any impacts of extensions and alterations upon water run-off and groundwater flows, both independently or cumulatively with other extensions, and demonstrate that the impact of the new development on water run-off and groundwater flows will be negated by the measures proposed. Reference should be made to CPG3 Sustainability (Flooding chapter).
- 4.25 Pockets of privately owned land make important contributions to the character of certain parts of the borough, both in established neighbourhoods and areas of new development, creating village greens, informal verges, set backs for established structures or settings for listed buildings. Building on such areas will generally be discouraged.
- 4.26 Where any type of development, either in a rear garden or on private land that forms part of a public space, may be appropriate in principle, a full assessment should be made prior to the commencement of the development to avoid any potential impact upon trees or other vegetation in the surrounding area. This assessment may be required as part of an application for planning permission.

Further information

- 4.27 The following professional bodies provide further guidance and advice on buildings and design matters:
- Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS); and
 - Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA).

Camden Planning Guidance

Amenity

London Borough of Camden

CPG 6



CPG6 Amenity

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1 Introduction

What is Camden Planning Guidance?

- 1.1 We have prepared this guidance to support the policies in our Local Development Framework (LDF). It is therefore consistent with the Camden Core Strategy and Development Policies, and is a formal Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which is an additional “material consideration” in planning decisions. This guidance will replace Camden Planning Guidance 2006, updating advice where appropriate and providing new guidance on matters introduced or strengthened in the LDF.
- 1.2 Camden Planning Guidance covers a range of topics (such as design, housing, sustainability and planning obligations) and all of sections should be read in conjunction with, and within the context of, Camden’s other LDF documents.

Amenity in Camden

- 1.3 A key objective of the Camden Core Strategy is to sustainably manage growth so that it avoids harmful effects on the amenity of existing and future occupiers and to nearby properties.

What does this guidance cover?

- 1.4 This guidance provides information on all types of amenity issues within the borough and includes the following sections:
 1. Air quality
 2. Contaminated land
 3. Noise and vibration
 4. Artificial light
 5. Daylight and sunlight
 6. Overlooking, privacy and outlook
 7. Construction management plans
 8. Access for all
 9. Wind and micro-climate
 10. Open space, outdoor sport and recreation facilities
- 1.5 This guidance supports the following Local Development Framework policies:

Camden Core Strategy

- CS5 - Managing the impact of growth and development
- CS15 - Protecting and improving our parks and open spaces & encouraging biodiversity
- CS16 - Improving Camden’s health and well-being

Camden Development Policies

- DP26 - Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours
- DP28 - Noise and vibration
- DP31 - Provision of, and improvements to, public open space and outdoor sport and recreation facilities
- DP32 - Air quality and Camden's Clear Zones

6 Daylight and sunlight

KEY MESSAGES:

- We expect all buildings to receive adequate daylight and sunlight.
- Daylight and sunlight reports will be required where there is potential to reduce existing levels of daylight and sunlight.
- We will base our considerations on the Average Daylight Factor and Vertical Sky Component.

6.1 Access to daylight and sunlight is important for general amenity, health and well-being, for bringing warmth into a property and to save energy from reducing the need for artificial lighting and heating. The Council will carefully assess proposals that have the potential to reduce daylight and sunlight levels for existing and future occupiers.

6.2 This guidance relates to:

- Camden Core Strategy policy CS5 - *Managing the Impact of Growth and Development*;
- Core Strategy policy CS14 - *Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage*; and
- Policy DP26 – *Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours* of the Camden Development Policies.

DP26 sets out how the Council will protect the quality of life of building occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that does not cause harm to amenity.

When will a daylight/sunlight report be required?

6.3 The Council expects that all developments receive adequate daylight and sunlight to support the activities taking place in that building.

6.4 A daylight and sunlight report should assess the impact of the development following the methodology set out in the most recent version of Building Research Establishment's (BRE) "Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: A guide to good practice". Reports may be required for both minor and major applications depending on whether a proposal has the potential to reduce daylight and sunlight levels. The impact will be affected by the location of the proposed development and its proximity to, and position in relation to, nearby windows.

WHAT DOES THE COUNCIL REQUIRE?

The Council will require a daylight and sunlight report to accompany planning applications for development that has the potential to reduce levels of daylight and sunlight on existing and future occupiers, near to and within the proposal site.

Daylight and sunlight reports should also demonstrate how you have taken into consideration the guidance contained in the BRE document on passive solar design; and have optimised solar gain. Please refer to the BRE guidance on daylight and sunlight.

- 6.5 While we strongly support the aims of the BRE methodology for assessing sunlight and daylight we will view the results flexibly and where appropriate we may accept alternative targets to address any special circumstances of a site. For example, to enable new development to respect the existing layout and form in some historic areas. This flexible approach is at the Council's discretion and any exception from the targets will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Daylight

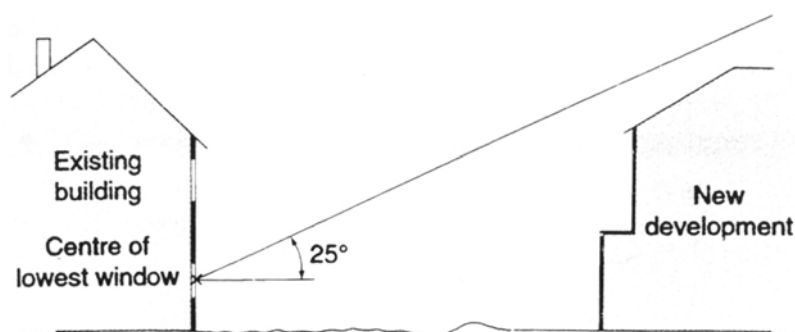
- 6.6 We will aim to minimise the impact of the loss of daylight caused by a development on the amenity of existing occupiers and ensure sufficient daylight to occupiers of new dwellings taking in account overall planning and site considerations. If your proposal will have an unreasonable impact on amenity the planning application will be refused. When assessing daylight issues, we will use the guidelines and methods contained in the BRE's *Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: A guide to good practice*.
- 6.7 There are two quick methods that can be used to assess access to daylight:

Daylight to new development

- project a 25 degree line, starting 2m above ground level from a wall of your proposed development;
- if none of the existing surrounding buildings extend above this line, then there is potential for good daylighting to be achieved in the interior of your new development.

Daylight to existing development

- project a 25 degree line from the centre of the lowest window on the existing building;
- if the whole of your new development is lower than this line then it is unlikely to have a substantial effect on the daylight enjoyed by occupants in the existing building.

Section

Source: BRE, Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: A guide to good practice.

- 6.8 For either test, if buildings extend above the 25 degree line a more detailed test needs to be carried out to fully assess either the loss of daylight in existing buildings or the level of daylight achievable in the new development. The two most common measurements of daylight of the more detailed test are the Vertical Sky Component (VSC) and the Average Daylight Factor (ADF).

Vertical Sky Component

The amount of light striking the face of a window

- 6.9 The Vertical Sky Component is expressed as a ratio of the maximum value of daylight achievable for a completely unobstructed vertical wall. The maximum value is almost 40%. This is because daylight hitting a window can only come from one direction immediately halving the available light. The value is limited further by the angle of the sun. This is why if the VSC is greater than 27% enough sunlight should be reaching the existing window. Any reduction below this level should be kept to minimum.
- 6.10 Windows to some existing rooms may already fail to achieve this target under existing conditions. In these circumstances it is possible to accept a reduction to the existing level of daylight to no less than 80% of its former value. Any greater reduction than this is likely to have a noticeable affect on amenity. If this occurs then applications may be refused.

Average Daylight Factor

Average Daylight Factor is a measure of the level daylight in a room. It can be used to establish whether a room will have a predominantly daylit appearance. It provides light levels below which a room should not fall even if electric lighting is provided.

- 6.11 The Average Daylight Factor can be used as a measure to determine whether a room will receive adequate daylight (expressed as a percentage). The ADV takes into account the:
- net glazed area of windows;

- the total area of the room surfaces (ceiling, floor, walls, and windows);
 - the average reflectance; and
 - the angle of visible sky.
- 6.12 If a predominately daylit appearance is required, then the daylight factor should be 5% or more if there is no supplementary electric lighting, or 2% or more if supplementary electric lighting is provided. This figure should be as high as possible to enable occupiers to rely on as much natural light and not use artificial lighting, but as a minimum for dwellings the figures should be 2% for kitchens, 1.5% for living rooms and 1% for bedrooms.
- 6.13 These minimum figures may not be applicable when measuring the impact of new buildings on existing dwellings as the simple preservation of minimum ADFs will not necessarily be seen as an indication of acceptability, especially if the VSC demonstrates a significant worsening in daylight levels. For existing dwellings the Council will consider the overall loss of daylight as opposed to the minimum acceptable levels of daylight. As the BRE guidance suggests, the readings will be interpreted flexibly as their aim is to support rather than constrain natural lighting. However, daylight is only one of the many factors in site layout design. Therefore, when applying these standards in Camden, we will take into consideration other site factors and constraints.
- 6.14 The calculation of the VSC and the ADF is complex. For full details on how these calculations are carried out you should refer to the most up to date version the BRE's "Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: A guide to good practice". For more complex and larger developments we will expect a daylight study to be submitted with the planning application showing the windows that will be affected and provide before development and post development figures for VSC and ADF.
- 6.15 Other methods can be used to measure daylight and these can be incorporated in daylight and sunlight reports, where necessary, as a supplement to VSC and ADF measurements, such as the No Sky Line (NSL) test contained within BRE guidance.

Sunlight

- 6.16 The design of your development should aim to maximise the amount of sunlight into rooms without overheating the space and to minimise overshadowing.

WHAT DOES THE COUNCIL EXPECT?

New developments should be designed to provide at least one window to a habitable space facing within 90 degrees of south, where practical. This window should receive at least 25% of Annual Probable Sunlight Hours, including at least 5% of Annual Probable Sunlight Hours between 21 September and 21 March, where possible.

Annual Probable Sunlight Hours

The annual amount of sunlight a window receives in an average year.

- 6.17 The BRE's "Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: A guide to good practice" provides guidance on access to sunlight in relation to:
- site layout, building orientation and overshadowing for new buildings;
 - protecting sunlight to existing buildings, and
 - new and existing gardens and open spaces.
- 6.18 Design for access to sunlight will be specific to the orientation of your site, and the specific design and uses within your proposed development. You should follow the detailed design requirements recommended in the "Sunlighting" section of the BRE document. The Council recognises that not all of the guidance contained within the BRE document, particularly orientation, can be adhered to in all developments due to the dense and constrained urban nature of Camden.

Other considerations**Right to Light**

- 6.19 The right to light is a legal right which one property may acquire over the land of another. If a structure is erected which reduces the light to an unobstructed property to below sufficient levels this right is infringed. A right to light can come into existence if it has been enjoyed uninterrupted for 20 years or more, granted by deed, or registered under the Rights of Light Act 1959. Planning permission does not override a legal right to light, however where a right to light is claimed, this is a matter of property law, rather than planning law. The Council will have no role or interest in any private dispute arising and it will be for the owner or occupier affected to seek a legal remedy.

Supporting documents

- 6.20 For further information on daylight and sunlight please refer to:
- Building Research Establishment (BRE). Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight: A guide to good practice.
- Copies of this are available directly from BRE.

BRE Bookshop, 151 Roseberry Avenue, London, EC1R 4GB
020 7505 6622
brebookshop@emap.com
www.constructionplus.co.uk

7 Overlooking, privacy and outlook

KEY MESSAGES:

- Development are to be designed to protect the privacy of existing dwellings;
- Mitigation measures are to be included when overlooking is unavoidable;
- Outlook from new developments should be designed to be pleasant;
- Public spaces benefit from overlooking as natural surveillance.

- 7.1 This section aims to ensure that when designing your development you successfully consider the potential impact on the privacy and outlook of neighbouring properties.
- 7.2 This guidance relates to Core Strategy policy CS5 Managing the Impact of Growth and Development and Core Strategy policy CS14 Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage.
- 7.3 Policy *DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours* of the Camden Development Policies outlines how the Council will protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours by only granting permission for development that does not cause harm to amenity.

Overlooking and privacy

- 7.4 Development should be designed to protect the privacy of both new and existing dwellings to a reasonable degree. Spaces that are overlooked lack privacy. Therefore, new buildings, extensions, roof terraces, balconies and the location of new windows should be carefully designed to avoid overlooking. The degree of overlooking depends on the distance and the horizontal and vertical angles of view. The most sensitive areas to overlooking are:
- Living rooms;
 - Bedrooms;
 - Kitchens; and
 - The part of a garden nearest to the house.

WHAT IS GOOD PRACTICE?

To ensure privacy, there should normally be a minimum distance of 18m between the windows of habitable rooms of different units that directly face each other. This minimum requirement will be the distance between the two closest points on each building (including balconies).

- 7.5 Where this standard cannot be met we may require you to incorporate some of the following design measures into your scheme to ensure

overlooking is reduced to an acceptable level. Design measures to reduce the potential for overlooking and the loss of privacy include:

- Careful consideration of the location of your development, including the position of rooms;
- Careful consideration of the location, orientation and size of windows depending on the uses of the rooms;
- Use of obscure glazing;
- Screening by walls or fencing; and
- Screening by other structures or landscaping.

7.6 Where landscaping is used as a method of screening, arrangements for ongoing maintenance should be put in place and this may be secured by a planning condition.

7.7 Public spaces and communal areas will benefit from a degree of overlooking due to the increased level of surveillance it can provide.

Outlook

7.8 Outlook is the visual amenity enjoyed by occupants when looking out of their windows or from their garden. How pleasant an outlook is depends on what is being viewed. For example, an outlook onto amenity space is more pleasant than an outlook across a servicing yard. You should design developments so that the occupiers have a pleasant outlook. You should screen any unpleasant features with permanent landscaping.

7.9 When designing your development you should also ensure the proximity, size or cumulative effect of any structures do not have an overbearing and/or dominating effect that is detrimental to the enjoyment of their properties by adjoining residential occupiers. You should carefully consider the location of bin or cycle stores if they are in close proximity to windows or spaces used by occupiers.

7.10 You should take particular care if your development adjoins properties with a single aspect over your development.

7.11 You should note that the specific view from a property is not protected as this is not a material planning consideration.

Further information

Better Places to Live: By Design - A companion guide to PPG3 (ODPM) makes number of design recommendations which recognise the importance of privacy in the home.

Perceptions of Privacy and Density in Housing report available from Design for Homes; 0870 416 3378 or www.designforhomes.org. This report highlights some of the issues facing households living at higher densities, and the implications for future design of buildings.