

Gateshead Access Panel

Disability Equality in Gateshead and the Region

Household Alterations + Extensions SPD Review January 2012

Response on behalf of Gateshead's Disability Service User Involvement Forum to the Public Consultation

LDF Feedback Report No 4
for
Development and Enterprise
Gateshead Council
Local Development Framework
NewcastleGateshead One Core Strategy

January 2012

Subject: NewcastleGateshead One Core Strategy
Document: Urban Design SPD, Draft Sept 2011
Reviews: 06 October 2011- 04 January 2012
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Additional Feedback to Consultation

Note: Reference should also be made to the following feedback reports prepared by GAP in response to the current public consultation:

LDF Feedback Reports

No 1: One Core Strategy Review January 2012

No 2: Urban Core Area Action Plan Review January 2012

No 3: Urban Design SPD Review January 2012

Gateshead Household Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), Draft Sept 2011: Review January 2012

Introduction

The following report has been prepared following review of the latest draft of this SPD, downloaded from the www.gateshead.gov.uk website, and is intended to reflect and where necessary update the initial response provided 06 October 2011 in an annotated version of sections “6.0 Sustainable design and construction” and “17.0 Accessibility”. The current draft has changed slightly in its format, with “Accessibility” now listed at section/chapter “16.0”.

Format of current draft SPD:

The current format is a draft version, and as such is assumed to be incomplete / unfinished as regards its content and format. However, GAP wish to point out that the current numbering and layout of the “Contents” page does not aid recognition of how the document is broken down into sections and chapters, which increases reliance of the readers actual studying and interpretation of the “Introduction” where the document layout is explained further. It would be more helpful if Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3 were actually written on the Contents list instead of sole reliance on the change of text colour on the page to indicate the different parts of the document.

Document Editing / Errors: Part 3, Page 30:

This lists chapter 9.0 as “Sustainable design and construction”, whereas in the document it is actually “Side extensions”.

Section 17.0 Driveways and Hard Standings is not listed on page 30.

GAP Feedback to Report Content:

Items that GAP wishes to highlight, or where GAP advises additional or alternative wording are highlighted in [blue text](#) in the following feedback.

6.0 Sustainable design and construction

What is sustainable development?

GAP advises the need to identify consideration of design flexibility to accommodate future accessibility needs as a fundamental need for sustainability. To address this issue, GAP advised the addition of a paragraph between 6.1 and 6.2 such as:

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“The potential for design flexibility to facilitate improved accessibility of a property when considering alterations or extensions can increase its sustainability, as well as reducing future potential development costs to address changing occupier needs”

16.0 Accessibility

GAP prefers to see this section on Accessibility located earlier in this SPD, such as directly following the sections on “5.0 General design guidance for all house extensions” on “6.0 Sustainable design and construction”.

Design guidance

The initial statement at 16.1 regarding:

“The potential for improving the accessibility to a property should be considered when alterations and extensions are proposed...”

should feature sooner in this SPD, as indicated above for section/chapter 6.0.

The relevance of considering accessibility in relation to sustainability should also be mentioned here, such as by addition of a phrase to the end of paragraph 16.1 as indicated by the blue text below:

“Also, recognising that needs may change in the future, consideration should be given to design flexibility so that with the minimum of adaptation such access and use can be incorporated; **thereby increasing the future potential for sustainability and adaptation of the property.**”

GAP advised the following paragraph, or alternative appropriate wording, is also added under “Design guidance” following paragraph 16.1:

“**Where adaptations and/or extensions are proposed to specifically meet the needs of a disabled occupier, some relaxation of planning guidance associated with permitted development may be allowed; whilst taking into consideration the effect on neighbouring properties, appearance and local character, etc., as discussed in section 5.0 General design guidance for all house extensions.**”

GAP advises the following phrase is also added under the sub heading of “Design guidance” in this section:

“**It should be recognised that the guidance given under other sections of this document regarding the minimum space standards for specific functions and facilities when designing alterations and extensions does not necessarily provide accommodation suitable for people who need more space for**

accessibility and manoeuvrability, such as those with impaired mobility. Further guidance on such matters can be obtained by reference to 'Building Regulations Approved Document M', 'British Standards 8300:2009', or by contacting your local authority Access Officer, Building Control Officer, or Gateshead Access Panel for advice."

Use of Ramps

16.11 Ramped approaches:

GAP has advised amendment to this paragraph for additional clarification and awareness regarding the impact of gradients on accessibility of people with impaired physical mobility: by insertion of the phrase as indicated in blue text below: -

"The maximum permissible gradient is 1:12, with the occasional exception in the case of short, steeper ramps when refitting existing buildings. **However, gradients steeper than 1:16 can be problematic for many disabled persons.** More detail technical plans are provided within Appendix A showing approved construction details for ramps to residential properties designed by Gateshead Council."

Appendix A – not provided?

As indicated above, this section makes reference to an Appendix A "showing approved construction details for ramps to residential properties designed by Gateshead Council", which is not currently included with this document.

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