



Guidance for residents
considering the development
or alteration of their properties

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GUIDANCE FOR RESIDENTS CONSIDERING THE DEVELOPMENT OR ALTERATION OF THEIR PROPERTIES

This guide is published so that residents considering any form of development to their properties can take into account the likely requirements of Croydon Council when making an application for planning consent.

It is emphasized that this document is intended to give general guidance only and Webb Estate Limited can take no responsibility for any reliance placed upon it. You are recommended to take professional advice when preparing plans, whether from an architect, surveyor, solicitor or planning consultant.

The following issues should be considered before you undertake any alterations to your property and are considered in more detail later in this guide.

1. The need for planning consent. Most changes to the external appearance of your property, including some changes to the garden, will need consent.
2. The advisability of letting your neighbours know of your intention to carry out work before applying for permission.
3. For general advice, consult your Road Chairman or the Chairman of the Planning Committee of Webb Estate Limited to consider:
4. Whether your proposed alterations conform to and/or support the character of the Webb Estate and that your proposal does not breach any of the covenants to which your property title is subject.
5. Croydon Council's Planning Policies – these give detailed help in the matters that should be taken into account when drawing up your plans, including:
 - i. What needs to be provided before any demolition takes place?
 - ii. The need for high design standards in Conservation Areas.
 - iii. How new building work should preserve the space between houses.
 - iv. The building line should be preserved and extensions set back.
 - v. The need to keep to the same building height as that on adjoining buildings.
 - vi. Keeping the pitch of the roof similar to that on adjoining buildings.
 - vii. Parking and access arrangements.
 - viii. Use of appropriate building materials.
 - ix. Landscaping standards.
 - x. The need to protect daylight and sunlight between buildings.
 - xi. The need to maintain privacy and to limit visual intrusion.
 - xii. Preserving woodland, trees and hedgerows.

THE NEED FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Permitted Development Rights

You can make certain types of minor changes to your house without needing to apply for planning permission. Those are called “permitted development rights”. They do NOT apply to flats, maisonettes or non-residential buildings.

In some areas, known generally as “designated areas” permitted development rights are more restricted. Conservation Areas, of which the Webb Estate is one, fall into the category of designated areas.

Listed Buildings

There are also different requirements if the property is a listed building. There are no nationally and statutorily listed buildings within the Webb Estate BUT there are a number of “Locally Listed Buildings” which have been nominated by Croydon Borough Council because they “significantly contribute to the townscape of an area by their historical or architectural interest”. Permitted development rights apply equally to locally listed buildings but the Council requires works to locally listed buildings to “respect the particular character and interest of the building”. Croydon Borough Council has a Supplementary Planning Document entitled “Local List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest” which can be accessed on the web site

Removal Permitted Development Rights

You should also note that the local planning authority can remove some permitted development rights either by issuing an Article 4 direction or removing them by way of a condition imposed on a planning permission. There is no Article 4 direction currently in force within the Webb Estate but some planning permissions for new houses within the Webb Estate may have conditions restricting permitted development rights. Where rights are restricted or curtailed, planning permission must be obtained for the proposed development.

Extensions or Additions

An extension or addition to your house is considered to be permitted development, not requiring explicit planning permission, subject to the following limits and conditions:

- No more than half the area of land around the “original house” would be covered by additions or other buildings.
- No extension forward of the principal elevation or side elevation fronting a highway.
- No extension to be higher than the highest part of the roof.
- Maximum depth of a single-storey rear extension of three metres beyond the rear wall for an attached house and four metres beyond the rear wall for a detached house.
- Maximum height of a single-storey rear extension of four metres.
- Maximum depth of a rear extension of more than one storey of three metres beyond the rear wall including ground floor.
- Maximum eaves height of an extension within two metres of the boundary of three metres.

- Maximum eaves and ridge height of extension no higher than existing house.
- Side extensions to be single storey with maximum height of four metres and within no more than half that of the original house.
- Two-storey extensions no closer than seven metres to rear boundary.
- Roof pitch of extensions higher than one storey to match existing house.
- Materials to be similar in appearance to the existing house.
- No verandas, balconies or raised platforms.
- Upper-floor, side-facing windows to be obscure-glazed; any opening to be 1.7m above the floor.
- On designated land no permitted development for rear extensions of more than one storey.
- On designated land no cladding of the exterior.
- On designated land no side extensions.

“Designated land” includes conservation areas and thus the restrictions for such land apply to the Webb Estate.

Doors and windows

Planning permission is not normally required for repairing, fitting or replacing doors and windows (including double glazing) but owners of properties in conservation areas are always advised to consult their local planning authority.

Fences, walls, gates and hedges

You will need to apply for planning permission if you wish to erect or add to a fence, wall or gate and:

- It would be over 1 metre high and next to a highway used by vehicles (or the footpath of such a highway); or over 2 metres high elsewhere, or
- Your right to put up or alter fences, walls and gates is removed by an article 4 direction or a planning condition; or
- Your house is a listed building or in the curtilage of a listed building.
- The fence, wall or gate, or any other boundary involved, forms a boundary with a neighbouring listed building or its curtilage.

You will **not** need to apply for planning permission to take down a fence, wall or gate, or to alter, maintain or improve an existing fence, wall or gate (no matter how high) if you don't increase its height. **In a conservation area**, however, you might need conservation area consent to take down a fence, wall or gate.

You do not need planning permission for hedges as such, though if a planning condition or a covenant restricts planting (for example, on “open plan” estates, or where a driver's sight line could be blocked) you may need planning permission and/or other consent.

Trees

Conservation Area status confers protection on all trees within the Webb Estate. The removal or lopping or felling or major pruning of trees without consent can result in substantial fines being levied by Croydon Borough Council. The Council's Tree Officer will advise if consent is required.

Demolition

In most cases planning permission is not required to demolish a building although a "prior approval application" will almost certainly be required. HOWEVER, Conservation Area Consent will almost always be required to demolish a building in a conservation area.

You should discuss any such proposals with Croydon Borough Council before you take any decision to demolish a building within the Webb Estate, to avoid the risk of legal action being taken against you.

Planning permission

Where permitted development rights do not apply, planning permission must first be obtained to authorize development. In some circumstances Conservation Area Consent will also be required.

Neighbours

It is recommended that whenever possible you consult with your immediate neighbours even before you start to draw up plans so that they are aware of your proposal. They may have some opinions that you may wish to take into account. Too often neighbours first become aware that some form of building work is proposed when notification seen on a lamppost that a planning application has been made. Therefore it is not surprising that in these circumstances the application may be critically received. Please note that it is no longer customary for local planning authorities, including Croydon Borough Council, to send notifications of planning applications to neighbours."

Your Road Chairman or the Chairman of the Webb Estate Limited Planning Committee are available for general guidance on the potential reaction of neighbours and the Company may have to review a planning application prior to it being submitted to the Council. The Chairman of Webb Estate Limited should also be able to provide guidance as to whether approval can be given under the covenants to which the title to your property is subject.

We recommend all residents consult a useful booklet "A Century of Garden First" by Vanda Bouri and published by Webb Estate Society (the predecessor of the Company). This includes a reference to the covenants and also the Policy Statement adopted by Croydon Council when designating the Webb Estate and Upper Woodcote Village as Conservation Areas. This booklet is normally available for purchase at the Lord Roberts Post Office.

WEBB ESTATE AND UPPER WOODCOTE VILLAGE CONSERVATION AREAS

Firstly, to give some background information, the Webb Estate and Upper Woodcote Village have been designated as Conservation Areas as they are considered by Croydon Council to be areas of special architectural and historical interest, and it wishes to preserve and enhance their character and appearance.

The Estate is considered to have a layout of special character, associated with high architectural quality.

Upper Woodcote Village was first designated as a Conservation Area and following lobbying by residents the Council conferred this status on the remainder of the Webb Estate. Residents, through the former Webb Estate Society, felt that William Webb's vision of the Estate as one large garden would be preserved as regulations covering conservation areas would underwrite the covenants which affect the titles of all properties on the Estate.

The Estate was developed long before planning regulations existed, but plots were initially sold subject to restrictive covenants set out in the title deeds to each property, and whilst these may vary from property to property, they continue in force. The covenants generally restrict any building within 10 or 15 feet from side boundaries and a stipulated distance from the front border. Any alteration requires consent under the covenants, and these will be considered, and agreed if appropriate, by the directors of Webb Estate Limited who are empowered by the shareholders to make these decisions.

Generally speaking the Company will agree to any alteration for which planning permission has been obtained unless there is a major breach of other covenants e.g. where the resulting development is closer to the border than permitted by the covenant or if there is a breach of the covenant restricting any fences (including gates) dividing or within properties other than live hedges or open wire fences. These covenants seek to maintain Webb's "Garden First" principle.

The Council does not pay regard to the covenants as such when considering whether planning permission can be granted, although the effect is usually very similar as the layout of the Estate "is of special character, associated with high architectural quality".

The Council decides whether to grant planning permission based on a number of policies that are incorporated in the Local Development Framework. It is clear from a study of planning consents granted or refused on the Estate that the council closely follows its policies. The policies can be read in full together with reasons for each of the policies, by accessing the Council website "www.croydon.gov.uk" clicking on "Croydon's planning policy framework" then clicking on "Local Development Framework"". Please also note the Supplementary Planning Guidance and Supplementary Planning Documents.

It is emphasised that planning consent will almost certainly be necessary and if owners carry out work without first obtaining consent the Council may require the property to be reinstated. In effect the owner will then be required to make a retrospective application but there is no certainty that consent will be granted, or if it is granted conditions will be imposed which may involve the owner in considerable expense, not to say worry. It is better to assume that in almost all cases planning permission will be needed. Planning officers at Croydon Council are very helpful and a brief discussion will usually clarify whether permission is needed and if so in what form.

When the Estate and Upper Woodcote Village were designated as Conservation Areas, the Council adopted a Policy Statement that set out the matters that must be taken into account before planning permission would be granted.

In particular, the Policy Statement confirmed that sub-division of plots would be permitted only in exceptional cases; that only residential uses are permitted; that detailed (not outline) planning applications will be considered; and that the planting schemes specified in the covenants should be maintained.

The Council drew particular attention to the need to ensure that the character of the Estate remains intact and “that the cumulative effect of small expressions of individuality may over a long period threaten the integrity of the Estate”.

GENERAL PLANNING AND CONSERVATION AREA CONSIDERATIONS

Putting together the council's planning policies, the designation as a Conservation Area, the Webb Estate covenants and the Webb “Gardens First” philosophy, the following represents the sorts of issues that should be taken into account if you are contemplating development:

- Preservation or enhancement of the area.
- Prevention of the loss of identity of the area.
- Seeking to retain locally listed buildings, which contribute to the character of the area.
- High architectural quality
- Spatial quality of general layout
- Consent to demolish will only be granted if the existing building makes no positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- The proposal pays special attention to scale, height and massing, historic building lines, traditional patterns of frontages, vertical or horizontal emphasis, plot widths, detailed design and traditional use of materials.
- Respecting existing traditional features including boundary treatments and ground surfaces.

- Retaining and protecting open spaces, trees, hedges and other landscape features contributing to the character of the area.
- Not adversely affecting the character of the area because of traffic generation, vehicle parking or noise.
- Respecting the visual character of the area where window bays, porches and boundary treatments all contribute to local character.
- Respecting the existing development pattern and plot and frontage widths.
- Respecting the need to maintain the spaces between buildings.
- All landscape associated with new development should be considered as an intrinsic part of the overall design concept.
- Any trees, existing natural habitats or other features which can be effectively incorporated in development should be retained.
- Existing trees to be physically protected during construction.
- Protecting the privacy and amenity of occupiers of surrounding buildings including protection from undue visual intrusion and loss of privacy.

How to contact Croydon Borough Council Planning Dept:

020 8726 6800

London Borough of Croydon Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon
CR0 1EA

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/planningandregeneration>

How to contact Webb Estate:

residentsinfo@webbestate.co.uk