



Building controls for Lofts & Dormers

Relaxation of Planning Rules Oct 2008

Easier planning rules for loft conversions & dormers
Under NEW regulations that came into effect from 1 October 2008 a loft conversion or small dormer extension is considered a permitted development, and generally does not require planning permission.

Permission is required if you plan to extend or alter the roof space more than specified limits and conditions:

- Volume increase of 40 cubic metres terraced houses or 50 cubic metres for detached & semi-detached houses. (2-3 bedroom houses generally will be ok for dormers)
- No extension beyond the plane of the existing roof slope of the principal elevation that fronts the highway. (i.e. no dormer to face the street)
- No extension to be higher than the highest part of the roof. (dormer does not increase the roof height)
- Materials to be similar in appearance to the existing house. (in keeping with house and street)
- No verandas, balconies or raised platforms. (in keeping with house and street)
- Side-facing windows to be obscure-glazed; any opening to be 1.7 metres above the floor. (so neighbours are not over looked and for safety)
- Dormer extensions, excluding hip to gable dormers (chimney wall to roof edge), are set back, as far as practicable, at least 20cm from the eaves (2 rows of tiles or a row of slates). (for aesthetics preventing a "3rd storey" appearance)
- Roof extensions not permitted development in designated areas, i.e. National Parks, ANOB, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites.

The majority of loft conversions including those with quite large dormers do not require Planning Permission as the development can be completed under Permitted Development Rights.

Building Regulations approval is always necessary when creating habitable areas.

Building regulations ensure the loft is converted to an appropriate standard for safety and structure. Building plans specify the details of the work and materials.