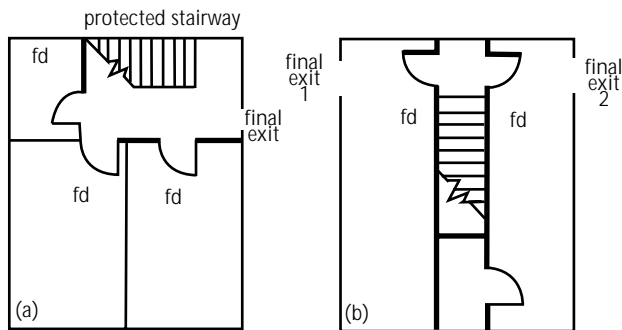


into a room then a half hour fire resistant partition must be provided. Layouts similar to the sketches must be achieved.



ground floor layout of houses showing the stair discharging into hallway or providing an alternative exit

- An escape window/roof light may be required from the new storey. This should be large enough to get out of, and close enough to gutter level for assistance off the roof. It should also be close enough to the new floor to climb out of. The Building Regulations specify minimum and maximum dimensions for the design of these window/roof lights.
- If the loft conversion involves a new second storey exceeding 50m² in floor area, or the new second storey contains more than two habitable rooms, additional fire precaution requirements apply.

SMOKE DETECTORS

In all cases, mains wired smoke detectors are required within 7m of the doors to a kitchen or living room and within 3m of bedroom doors.

PLANNING PERMISSION

Planning Permission and Building Regulation approval are not the same. Building Regulations will often apply when Planning Permission is unnecessary, and vice-versa. You should always check with the Development Control Section of the Council to find out if your proposal needs Planning Permission.

Your Local Building Control Service

The Building Control Service is here to help, if you are in any doubt over Building Regulation requirements or require further information, please telephone or call at your local Building Control Office.

Whilst every care has been taken in compiling this information leaflet and the statements contained herein the publishers and promoters cannot accept responsibility for any inaccuracies. Building Regulations are changed from time to time, if you did not receive this leaflet directly from your Local Building Control Authority, check with them that the information here is still current.

For further advice on this subject or any other Building Control matter please contact your Local Authority office as detailed below.

Blackburn Borough Council
01254 585747
Blackpool Borough Council
01253 25212
Burnley Borough Council
01282 425011
Chorley Borough Council
01257 515240
Fylde Borough Council
01772 671488
Hyndburn Borough Council
01254 388111
Lancaster City Council
01524 582369

Borough of Pendle
01282 661661
Preston Borough Council
01772 254881
Borough of Rossendale
01706 874333
South Ribble Borough Council
01772 625521
Ribble Valley Borough Council
01200 425111
West Lancashire District Council
01695 585136
Borough of Wyre
01253 887242

BUILDING REGULATIONS

Information Leaflet No.3

Loft Conversions

Incorporating amendments to Regulations from 1st July 2000

Local Authority
BUILDING CONTROL

DISTRICT SURVEYORS ASSOCIATION

Lancashire District



AIMS OF THE LEAFLET

This leaflet is intended to provide advice on a particular aspect of the Building Regulations. It is not a statement of law but is intended to help you understand the system. For further information you should contact your local Building Control Office.

INTRODUCTION

This guide covers the conversion of lofts within single occupancy bungalows and two storey houses, and should not be applied to loft conversions within flats, maisonettes, houses in multiple occupancy, houses of more than two storey or non-residential property.

You should obtain professional advice either from an Architect, Surveyor or Structural Engineer and discuss your proposals with the District Building Control Surveyor preferably before making a Building Regulations application. For information on how to submit a Building Regulation application refer to information leaflet No.1.

THE ROOF

Your loft may be very spacious or very small dependent on your existing roof construction which may be a modern trussed rafter design comprising many timber sections, or a traditional roof design with relatively large timber purlins and rafters.

Whatever the nature of the roof, if it is intended to make alterations to the roof structure to form either dormers or roof lights it will generally be necessary for you to demonstrate how the loadings on the roof will be redistributed and supported.

Thermal insulation must be provided to the walls and ceilings of the new rooms. The insulation must not obstruct existing and newly created air paths which are provided to reduce the possibility of condensation in the roof void.

FLOORS

The existing ceiling joists are unlikely to be able to support the additional loads of a new floor. New floors

must be supported at the ends on walls or beams and should be sized according to the span or size of the floor.

- Floors should not be constructed off the existing ceiling joists as these are only designed to take light weights. The practice of laying boards over the top of old ceiling joists is not recommended as future owners may unwittingly consider that the floor is more substantial than it really is, and put it to a use that could lead to severe damage.
- The new loft floor in the house will have to resist the effects of fire and smoke for half an hour. This will assist you and your family to escape safely or to remain in the room for rescue by the Fire Service.

WALLS

The walls on which any new wall or floor sits must be load bearing, that is to say strong enough to carry the new weight and have a proper foundation. It will be necessary to carefully check that these two criteria are met as it could lead to a complete re-design leading to delays and extra cost if overlooked.

- In all dwellings other than existing bungalows the new room must be separated from the rest of the house by a wall having fire resistance of at least half an hour and it must have a self closing fire door to it. This wall may be positioned at the top or bottom of the new stair serving the new room.
- The existing walls around the existing stairs should have fire resistance of not less than half an hour and have either self closing fire doors, or if there is an alternative escape from the new room by way of an escape window/roof light, self closing devices fitted to the existing doors.
- Glazing in any existing wall or door around the existing stairs must be replaced with fire resistant glass.
- The walls to a new dormer must be treated with a weather resistant finish and provided with thermal insulation. If a wall to a dormer is within 1m of the boundary to a neighbouring property, it

will be necessary to provide fire protection to the wall from both inside and outside.

STAIRS

To gain access to a new room you will need to consider the type of stair you would like.

The preferred style of a stair is a traditional straight flight with landings top and bottom and equal sized steps. However, spiral stairs and space saver stairs are permitted in certain circumstances.

- In all cases suitable guarding and handrails must be provided and good headroom maintained over the stairs at not less than 2m above the flight measured vertically. Where there is not enough space a reduced headroom of 1.9m will, in certain circumstances, be acceptable.
- In a house, if the new staircase is constructed off a floor over a lounge or other living room, it will be necessary to upgrade the fire resistance of the existing floor to half an hour. It is safer and cost effective to ensure that the new stair rises from within the existing staircase enclosure wherever this is possible.

ESCAPE IN CASE OF FIRE

This is defined as the unaided evacuation of the building by the occupants and is provided principally by the stair, which must discharge to a final exit, normally the front or back door.

Bungalows

- Providing that the new stair discharges at ground level into a hallway serving a final exit door, then the means of escape will be satisfactory. Provision must be made for escape windows/roof lights from the new first floor habitable rooms.

Houses

- Open plan layouts at ground level are not permitted, the existing stair should preferably discharge into a hallway. If the stair discharges