

## 5. GUIDELINES FOR THE DESIGN OF LOFT CONVERSIONS

Many properties on the Estate have lofts which could potentially be used as additional living space. Roof lights or dormer windows are required to provide natural light and these changes require approval.

Loft conversions are subject to a variety of rules and regulations and it is essential to seek expert professional advice. Structural design, access, means of escape, thermal insulation and other issues are subject to the building regulations and require local authority approval. Planning permission may also be required.

### General

Proposals for a loft conversion should be in keeping with the original design of the property and where appropriate, to properties in the vicinity.

Roof extensions and proposals to change the profile of the roof (for example Mansard roofs) are unlikely to be approved. Consult a specialist loft company or an architect who will carry out a detailed measured survey and can advise on building regulations.

### Dormer windows

Traditional dormer windows do not dominate a roof and therefore as a general rule, the width of the dormer should not exceed half the width of the roof and the height of the dormer should not exceed half the height from eaves to ridge.

The proportions of the house need to be considered. Large detached properties may require two or three dormers rather than one large dormer, in order to reduce the scale and this may be less than 50% of the width of the roof. Properties with rear two-storey additions are a special case. See page 18 for an acceptable template for these projects. The rear dormer width may need to be less than 50% of the width of the main roof to ensure that the size does not dominate.

In order to ensure that the loft conversion does not spoil the character of an individual house and/or groups of houses, the design of the dormer window should comply with the following:

- It should be located at the rear and not, generally, at the front or side of the property.
- The size should be in proportion to the size of the roof and should complement the style and period of the property.
- On properties with rear additions, the dormer should be no higher than the ridge of the back-addition roof. Party walls should not be raised.
- No form of balcony or external terrace should be included
- No external rainwater gutters or down pipes should be visible and UPVC fascias are not suitable.
- Windows must match the main house in material and fenestration design. White painted timber is most common, but good quality dark grey powder coated aluminium to match the cladding material colour may be acceptable subject to detail. High quality heritage UPVC windows, which are very similar to timber, may also be acceptable in some cases where maintenance access is difficult. Cladding materials should match or complement the existing roofing (see also Guidelines for External Repairs, Replacement and Redecoration - Roofs, Chimneys and Walls). Generally, lead or zinc cladding are preferred over slate or tile, as these are in keeping, low maintenance and concealed gutters can be more easily achieved.

## **WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR APPLICATION**

- Drawings in support of the application must include construction detail at a scale of not less than 1:20 and must accurately show the front and side elevations, and a section through the dormer including the internal floor level.
- Detail drawings are required to demonstrate that rainwater will be discharged via concealed gutters and carefully designed roof falls.
- Additional design drawings may be requested in order to fully understand design and construction detail.
- The materials for the window and cladding must be specified.

### **Roof lights**

Small roof lights are a feature of many traditional houses on the Estate, often providing natural light to stairs and landings. These traditional roof lights have a slender cast iron frame set into the roof tiles. Copies of this style of roof light are now marketed as 'conservation roof lights'. Modern roof lights have more conspicuous frames and flashings and stand proud of the roof finish which can be visually obtrusive.

Please note the following when making an application for a roof light:

- New roof lights in the front of a property that are visible from the street will not be permitted.
- If an original roof light in the front of a property is being replaced, please send an image of the original to the Scheme of Management Office. A conservation type roof light of the same size in the same place does not require a licence, but please provide a record of what you have replaced.
- Small roof lights may be acceptable at the side of the house if set back from the road. A conservation roof light should be specified.
- Roof lights at the rear of the property will be approved as long as they do not dominate the roof.
- Roof lights which open to form a balcony will not be approved.