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# Feasibility Study

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## Loft Conversion for

Mr and Mrs Smith  
12 High Street  
Oxford

24<sup>th</sup> October 2008

Our Ref: EP101



# 1 Design Report

## 1.1 General

### Existing Property

The existing property is a modern, 3 bedroom detached house which has not previously been extended. The existing roof structure has been formed from attic trusses which it is assumed will meet structural building regulations requirements. It may be necessary to obtain calculations for the trusses as part of the Building Regulations submission.

### Client Requirements

The Client would like to convert the existing roof space to form a new fourth bedroom and an en-suite shower room.

### Design Comments

It is unusual to come across a property where the original house builder has thought ahead and provided attic trusses so that converting the loft is relatively straightforward.

As there is plenty of headroom within the roof space, our view is that a dormer addition is not necessary as this will mean extensive alteration works including removal of most of the original truss members. This is likely to add £7,000 - £10,000 to the cost of the work.

The main design limitation is ensuring that the new staircase has sufficient headroom over it (2m) and that the space required to fit the new stairs does not reduce the usable floor space in the loft. The layout shown works well as it positions the new stairs over the existing and minimizes the landing space at loft level. It also means that no space is lost at first floor level which remains as existing.

We have indicated rooflight positions to allow natural light onto the new landing area as well as the shower room and bedroom. We have aligned the rooflights and made them symmetrical so that they appear 'designed' from the outside. The rooflights are sized at 550 x 900 mm so that they fit between the existing trusses. We have not shown rooflights to the front of the property at this stage, although these could be included.

The shower room works well as it is sited over the existing bathroom and can make use of the existing soil pipe. The final layout of the bathroom can be changed to suit your requirements but be aware that the shower cubicle should be kept within the 1.8m headroom zone.

We have indicated a possible store/wardrobe area and the low level eaves areas could also be used for storage.

We have spoken to our structural engineer who has indicated that some strengthening of the stair trimmer will be required although it is possible that this could be achieved by bolting a new timber to the existing floor joist. This would have to be checked at the detailed design stage.

# 1 Design Report

## 1.2 Planning Permission

We have spoken to the duty planner at the planning department at Cherwell District Council who advised that installing rooflights would not normally require planning permission and is allowed under permitted development.

However, they did point out that on modern estates, they sometimes put conditions on the original planning approval which may limit any new windows and this should be checked. If planning permission is required, the planner we spoke to said that there would be no council fee for this as it relates to a previous condition.

We would recommend that a copy of the plans is sent to the planners as part of the detailed design process asking if planning permission is required and, if planning is needed, we will deal with this on your behalf. If it is required, it is unlikely to be refused as the rooflights will only really allow views of the garden centre to the rear who are unlikely to object.

### Council Fees

**No fee required.**

## 1.3 Building Regulations Approval

Be aware that Building Regulations approval is a completely separate requirement from planning and most projects will require Building Regulations approval even if they do not require planning permission. The Building Regulations deal with the technical performance of the building including the structure, thermal insulation, ventilation, drainage, fire protection and electrical works. Our budget cost allows for a standard of construction that meets the requirements of the current building regulations.

The process is divided into two stages as below.

1. Plan Approval – at this stage, the council will check that the plans and any supporting documents conform to building regulations standards and, once these are received, will issue a plan approval certificate enabling you to commence works.
2. Inspection – once the works commence, the council's building inspector will carry out a series of inspections of the work and, once satisfied that they are acceptable, will issue a second approval document known as a 'completion certificate'. This is an important document that will be required if you sell the property in the future.

This proposal will need Building Regulations approval and we will obtain this for you as part of our design stage work.

# 1 Design Report

## 1.3 Building Regulations Approval

The main effect of the regulations on this scheme is the numerous requirements relating to the new staircase. The stairs need 2 m headroom above them and the same headroom is required between the original staircase and the new one. You will need a landing at the top of the stairs in the loft that also has a minimum headroom requirement.

The existing habitable room doors will have to be upgraded to fire doors and the new loft bedroom will require a fire door.

A high standard of thermal insulation is required to modern loft conversions and, as the existing rafters are 220mm deep and the roof already has breathable felt, the new insulation can be fitted in between the rafters.

As part of our design service, we will obtain structural calculations for the stair trimming using our approved structural engineer (fee shown below).

### Council Fees

Plan Fee (payable on submission of plans to council)

**£217.37 inc VAT**

Inspection Fee (payable once building works have commenced)

**£252.63 inc VAT**

### Other Fees

Structural Engineer (payable at detailed design stage)

**£350.00 inc VAT**

## 1.4 Other Approvals

### Restrictive Covenants

Many modern properties have restrictive covenants imposed on them by the original developer so we would recommend that you check this with your solicitor by checking your property deeds.

### Party Wall Act

As the property is detached, there are no party wall issues and this proposal falls outside the scope of the Act.

# 2 Specification

## **General**

The works will be carried out in accordance with current Building Regulations and relevant British Standards and Codes of Practice.

## **Demolition**

Allow for general demolition items including forming the new stairwell opening and removing the existing floor coverings in the loft.

## **Foundations and Ground Floors**

No allowance is made for underpinning the existing foundations.

## **Walls**

Allow for new internal partitions, making good, etc as shown on plans. Allow for plastering as required.

## **Carpentry and Joinery**

Allow for roof carcassing as required. Allow for thermal insulation and plasterboarding.

Allow for new rooflights, internal doors and frames (kitchen door is excluded), skirtings and architraves.. Allow for new floor joists and trimming around staircase.

Allow for new stairs (style to match existing).

Allow for new sound insulation to floor and for forming eaves storage areas with low level access doors.

## **Roofing**

Allow for making good around new rooflights.

## **Services**

Allow for electrical works including provision of smoke alarm to new loft landing.

Allow for heating works – 2 new radiators to loft bedroom and one to shower room.

Allow for plumbing works to shower room including extending hot and cold supplies and wastes and installing new Client issue sanitaryware (i.e. we have not allowed for supplying the sanitaryware.)

No allowance is made for a new boiler or cylinder. The existing system is pressurized so no water tanks are required.

## **Miscellaneous**

Allow for ceramic wall tiling (Client to issue tiles) to shower cubicle in room. No allowance is made for clearing the existing loft, carpets, curtains, wardrobes or internal decorations.

# 3 Budget Costing

## Cost Summary

Item	Includes	Cost
<b>Preliminaries</b>	Scaffold, skips, plant hire, protection, health and safety, cleaning	£1,819.44
<b>Demolition Work</b>	See specification	£359.72
<b>Foundation Works</b>	N/A	£0.00
<b>Drainage Works</b>	Extension of SVP	£105.29
<b>Ground Floors</b>	N/A	£0.00
<b>Walls</b>	Internal stud walls and new steel/timber stair trimmers.	£3,130.34
<b>Roof Works</b>	N/A	£0.00
<b>Carpentry and Joinery</b>	Roof carcassing, thermal insulation, sound insulation, plasterboarding, internal doors, rooflights, timber floor joists, chipboard flooring, stairs, skirtings and architraves.	£10,811.60
<b>Plumbing and Heating</b>	Hot and cold services, wastes, fitting sanitaryware, supply and fitting radiators.	£2,558.94
<b>Electrical Works</b>	Power points, lighting, smoke alarms, extractor fans and testing.	£1,582.88
<b>Plastering</b>	Walls and ceilings and making good	£1,085.83
<b>Decorating</b>	N/A	£0.00
<b>Tiling</b>	Ceramic wall tiling to shower tray	£222.18
<b>External Works</b>	N/A	£0.00
<b>Net Cost Total</b>		<b>£21,676.23</b>
<b>VAT</b>		<b>£3,793.34</b>
<b>Total With VAT</b>		<b>£25,469.57</b>
<b>Budget Cost</b>		<b>£25,000 - £27,000</b>

# 4 Project Timing

## Design

Prepare plans and submit to planning department	1 - 2 weeks
To obtain planning permission (N.B. It is assumed planning permission is not required and confirmation of this will be obtained. If planning is required it will add approx 8 weeks to the overall project time).	N/A
To prepare working drawings	2 – 3 weeks
To obtain Building Regulations approval	4 – 5 weeks
<b>Total Design Time</b>	<b>7 – 10 weeks</b>

## Building

Obtain quotations and appoint builder	3 - 4 weeks
To complete building works	7 – 9 weeks
<b>Total Building Time</b>	<b>10 – 13 weeks</b>

**Total Project Time** **17 – 23 weeks**

# 5 What Happens Next?

## Design

If you wish to proceed with your project, the first stage is to meet with you so that we can complete some additional measuring work and discuss any design changes you would like to make.

50% of our planning stage payment will be due and following the meeting, we will complete the planning drawings for the project and send them to you for approval.

Following your acceptance, we will submit the plans for planning permission (or written confirmation that planning permission is not required). The second 50% of our planning stage payment will then be due.

Once planning permission has been granted, we will then complete the building regulations drawings. We will require 50% of our Building Regulations fee at this stage.

Upon completion of the drawings, we will submit them for Building Regulations approval. The second 50% of our building regulations fee will then be due.

If you require our Builders Pack, we will usually prepare this at the same time as the building regulations drawings so that you can obtain builders quotations.

Our fee excludes council fees and any third party fees such as structural engineer or party wall surveyor fees.

Our fee is excluded from the budget building cost for the works.

## Building

Once all approvals have been obtained, you are then free to commence building works once you have agreed a quotation and contract dates with a builder.

We are happy to provide advice to you or the builder once building works are underway.