

## ROOF SPACE CONVERSION

### **ROOF SPACE OR ATTIC CONVERSIONS REQUIRE A BUILDING REGULATION APPLICATION WHERE THE INTENTION IS TO PROVIDE;**

- an extra bedroom
- a bathroom
- a playroom
- a study/office
- a floored storage area

Where the intended use is to store lightweight items such as suitcases, general household items etc., then the provision of loose boarding is generally satisfactory. An application would not be required in such circumstances provided the access to the area is by ladder and not by a new staircase. For the purposes of the Regulations a ladder is a flight with a pitch greater than 55°.

Ceiling joists are generally not intended to act as a floor and are not designed to support heavy loads. Therefore it is important to inform the Building Control section and make a Building Regulation application where the proposed use is for anything other than light storage.

### **WHY INFORM THE BUILDING CONTROL SECTION?**

You are legally obliged to do so as they administer and enforce the Building Regulations, on behalf of the Council, to ensure buildings are constructed and altered to acceptable standards. Where such works have been carried out without their knowledge and approval, future property sales could be jeopardised when solicitors acting on the purchaser's behalf carry out conveyancing procedures.

### **WHAT IF I HAVE NO PRIOR APPROVAL AND I WANT TO SELL MY HOUSE?**

#### **Work Completed prior to 11 November 1985**

If the work was completed prior to 11 November 1985 then you cannot apply to the Council for a regularisation certificate. It would then be up to the purchaser to satisfy themselves via their surveyor that work was of a satisfactory standard.

#### **Work completed after 11 November 1985**

If the work was completed after 11 November 1985 you can apply to the Council for a Regularisation Certificate. The cost for submitting this retrospective application is available by contacting the Building Control Section on Tel: 01785 619340 or e-mail [buildingcontrol@staffordbc.gov.uk](mailto:buildingcontrol@staffordbc.gov.uk) who will provide you with details of the current fees.

It is important to note that following on from a visit by our Building Control Officer there are three possible decisions which could be given - these are:-

- to approve and issue a Regularisation Certificate if the work is deemed to be in accordance with the Building Regulations in force at the time of construction
- to issue a list of points which need to be attended to in order to comply with the Regulations.

This may include a request for certain items of construction to be exposed. (If the owner of the property wishes to rectify and/or expose areas of construction, further inspections will be carried out. A Regularisation Certificate may then be issued if the work is deemed to comply with the Regulations in force at the time of construction).

- To reject and advise that the work does not comply with the Regulations. A certificate will NOT be issued in this instance.

**It should be noted that the issuing of a Regularisation is at the discretion of the Local Authority.**

### **WHAT IF I AM CONSIDERING CONVERTING THE ROOF SPACE IN MY NEW HOME?**

You will need to contact our Planning Section who will advise if planning permission is required and Building Control to ensure current regulations can be achieved.

Roof space conversions are generally considered to be a simple procedure. **This is not the case.** They should be designed and constructed by people aware of the health and safety aspects affecting building occupiers.

The following points must be considered and catered for in roof space conversions:-

- 1 Floors, certain walls and doors are required to be structurally able to resist the effects of a fire for a specified period of time, usually 30 minutes in a typical domestic situation. Such provisions, among others, are essential to ensure safe escape in the event of fire or other emergency.
- 2 The new floor and room layout requires a safe and easy exit route in the event of fire. Careful consideration of this item is of critical importance.
- 3 The provision of an automatic smoke detection system to give early warning of a fire is required.
- 4 The provision of a protected escape route.
- 5 The structural adequacy of the “new floor” has to be designed and checked to ensure it can safely support the new loads placed upon it, without suffering collapse or excessive deflection.
- 6 Ventilation is essential to most room areas to prevent unpleasant living conditions.
- 7 Condensation, if not properly catered for especially in areas where it cannot be seen, can cause problems. Certain roof space layouts and roof construction types require careful consideration of ventilation and vapour check barrier provisions.