GUIDANCE NOTES

Produced by

Tendring District Council
Building Control Service

Garage Conversion

FOUNDATIONS

Support will be needed for any new walls constructed to infill the former door opening.

If the original foundations do not continue below the door opening, either:-

a) A new foundation should be provided, the depth of this foundation will depend on the ground conditions on the site and that of the existing foundation (generally between 750mm – 1000mm).

b) 2 No. 100 x 150 deep concrete lintels or 2 No. 100 x 110 pre-stressed lintels may be used to span the opening of a single garage door. The ends of the lintels should be cut into the existing brickwork to ensure a minimum end bearing of 150mm,

c) If the existing floor slab was thickened at the door opening and a lightweight form of construction is proposed for the infill, it may be possible to carry this infill on the existing floor. It will be necessary to expose the edge of the slab to ascertain its acceptability.

WALLS

Any new wall constructed to fill in the former door opening should be constructed to achieve a U value not exceeding 0.28W/m^2k. A typical wall construction to achieve this would be 100mm brick/blockwork, 85/100mm insulation (depending on blockwork type) and a 100mm blockwork inner leaf.

If the existing external wall is un-insulated, then upgrading will be required to ensure a reasonable thickness of insulation. The work necessary will depend on the construction of the external wall.

If the existing external garage wall is only 105mm thick (e.g. single skin brickwork), then an insulated cavity should be provided with a new inner skin of blockwork or timber studwork.

If the new inner skin is blockwork, this should only be supported off the slab if extra lightweight blocks are used.

If the existing external garage wall is 215mm solid brickwork or an un-insulated cavity, it may be possible to upgrade the thermal resistances of the wall via insulated drylining.

Where the garage is semi-detached, sound insulation may be required to the party wall. Construction as for the external walls above should, in most cases, be sufficient.
If only part of a garage is being converted, both thermal insulation and 30 minutes fire separation must be provided to any new separating walls.

FLOORS

The existing floor will need upgrading to ensure adequate damp protection and to prevent heat loss.

Damp protection can be provided by either a liquid or sheet membrane. This should link with the damp proof course in the wall. The floor should be insulated to achieve a U value not exceeding 0.25w/m^2K. The thickness of insulation needed to achieve this will depend on the type used, 100mm of polystyrene is generally acceptable.

The floor finish can be 18mm T & G chipboard or 65mm reinforced screed.

PITCHED ROOF/CEILING

A traditional pitched roof should be insulated to achieve a U value not exceeding 0.16w/m^2K.

This can be achieved by providing 100mm fibreglass between the joists, with a further 150mm layer laid across the joists.

The roof should be ventilated at the eaves equivalent to an area of not less than a continuous strip 10mm wide and if the roof is a mono-pitch at high level with an equivalent area of not less than a continuous strip 5mm wide.

FLAT ROOF

Flat roofs are likely to need upgrading to provide adequate thermal insulation and roof ventilation. In some instances, this could be problematic and you are advised to contact us to discuss this before work commences.

WINDOWS/DOORS

Windows and doors should be draught proofed and be double glazed to achieve a U value not exceeding 1.6mw/m^2K (e.g. Low E glass).

Should the new room not lead directly to the hall approaching the front door, the new window should be sized to allow escape. This will require an unobstructed area of 0.33m^2 with a minimum dimension of 450mm high/wide and be positioned between 800-1100mm above ground level.

If the new door/window is installed within a cavity wall, then insulated damp proof courses should be provided around the opening.
Should the new door/window be installed within a solid wall, then insulated dry lining will be required around the opening to prevent thermal bridging/heat loss.

VENTILATION

Ventilation openings should be provided to each room, there is no minimum size for kitchens, utility rooms or bathrooms, but other rooms require a ventilation opening of at least 1/20th of their floor area.

Background ventilation is required to habitable rooms at a rate of 5000mm^2 and to kitchens, bathrooms, WC's and utility rooms at a rate of 2500mm^2.

Suitably sized mechanical ventilation ducted to external air or passive stack ventilation is required to bathrooms, kitchens, utility rooms and some WC's.

ELECTRICAL

It is advised that all electrical work is carried out by a contractor certified under one of the "Part P" approved installer schemes. Failing this you may be required to arrange for an electrical test to be carried out which could incur additional costs.

OTHERS

New rooms should be fitted with a light fitting that will only accept energy efficient bulbs.

Insulation between all building elements should be linked to prevent thermal bridging.

NOTE

These details are not intended to show you how to comply fully with the Building Regulations but are produced only as a guide. They show the more common means of achieving compliance with the Building Regulations, but are not the only way to comply.

If your proposals differ in any way from these details or you have any queries, you should discuss these with the Area Building Control Officer before work commences. If you or your builder are not confident in the information/construction required to comply, then professional advice should be sought from an architect or similar.

BUILDING CONTROL APPLICATIONS AND CHARGES

There are standard fees set for garage conversions and they can be found here. There is also information to enable you to choose between a Full Plans or Building Notice type of application.

If you are employing a builder with lots of experience of garage conversions then the Building Notice will enable you to proceed without having any drawings (however please contact Planning to determine whether or not planning permission is required. If it is required then drawings are normally necessary).

Please ensure that a Building Regulation application is submitted before you start the work.

All cheques should be made payable to Tendring District Council.

For More Information please call
Tendring Building Control
01255 686131
or email us at BCInspections@tendringdc.gov.uk

or alternatively call into our offices in Thorpe Road Weeley, CO16 9AJ.

Other guidance leaflets can be downloaded using the following link:

Click here for further guides