



**Aztech Architecture**  
**Your Guide to**  
**Permitted**  
**Development**  
**Rights**

Welcome

## To Aztechs Guide to Permitted Development

Here at Aztech we enable homeowners like you to add **space and value** to your home without the need for planning permission, through the Permitted Development Rights you own as part of your property.

On average you can add **75% more space** and **30% in value** to **your home**.

We have developed a simple **3-step** process which enables you to **Qualify, Analyse** and **Transform** this potential in your home by utilising your Permitted Development Rights.

**This guide is intended to help explain in more detail what Permitted Development is and what it can mean for you and your home.**

## But what can I do?

### Planning v Permitted Development

Understanding what changes you're allowed to make to your home can be challenging, but is absolutely critical when you're about to embark on a renovation project.

Planning is a complex arena fraught with difficulties and tales of woe! The old adage "You don't know what you don't know" couldn't be more apt.

Ultimately, you have two main options.

On one hand, you can go down the path of most resistance – otherwise known as the traditional full plans submission. This will involve Aztech submitting your proposal to the local planning authority. You will need to pay the householder planning fee and include any supplementary information such as Design Access Statements or Flood Risk Assessments. Your proposal will then be processed by the local Authority (typically taking 8-12 weeks). This process will involve a number of internal consultations (between planners), as well as some external consultations (between your neighbours to planners).

It's subjective (planners and neighbours) and time-consuming. And you're left in a bit of a pickle. Do you design what you really want and risk being refused? Or do you play safe and ultimately get something that is a compromise?

Alternatively, you can go down the path of least resistance.

By utilising the Permitted Development Rights already attached to your home you can bypass the conventional planning process. They are objective – which means once we find out you've got them (and most properties do), that's it. No one can have a say – not the local authority, nor your neighbours. They are fully legal, and, in fact, your local authority will issue you with a Certificate of Lawful Development to document this (good to have when you come to sell your house). Better still, there are other huge benefits to Permitted Development. You can often do more than what we be allowed under full planning – larger lofts and extensions, more extensive glazing and large outbuildings, to name a few.

In some cases it makes sense to use a combination of both options, ie Aztech apply for planning permission for an extension and apply for a Certificate of Lawful Development for a loft conversion. This will enable you to have the best of both worlds if you are tackling a project of greater ambition over several phases. Either way, Aztech will help assess which option is best for you.

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## Solution

The very first step you take with Aztech is a Qualify Report – whose very purpose is to show you exactly what space you can add to your home. And because we always explore your Permitted Development Rights, most times you'll discover that you definitely can add that loft conversion or extension and can get going without enduring the time, cost and hassle of the planning process.

This is often a very simple process and we can discuss this with you with a simple telephone call, alternatively you can browse our website and most of the information will be available.

“This is an essential service to clients who are considering purchasing a property, in unfortunate cases properties are purchased without investigating the properties future development or Permitted Development potential and then decide to convert the loft only to find out that there is inadequate headroom, for example and not possible to convert.”

Of course, if you do need planning permission, we are experts at getting it for you. Leave all the paperwork to us and we will do our utmost to get you permission as fast as possible.

“If you want to understand the true value of your home, or a property you are thinking of buying, it’s essential that you understand the Permitted Development Rights attached to it.”

## **The Five Foundations of Permitted Development**

Permitted Development Rights (PD Rights) enable you to transform your home without the need for planning permission.

### **1. REFORM**

In late 2008, the government relaxed the laws surrounding Permitted Development and in 2010 published technical guidance on how to interpret the 2008 document.

The effect is that homeowners are now able to make more changes and add more space to their home – all without the need for planning permission.

The development possibilities homeowners now have under PD are huge. They include adding lofts, extensions (single and two-storey), garages, glazing, outbuildings, porches, off-street parking and micro generation technologies (things like solar panels and ground-source heat pumps) ... ..and much more.

Understanding whether you have PD Rights attached to your property is critical in understanding the TRUE VALUE of your home.

### **2. OBJECTIVE**

The great thing about PD Rights is that they are objective and not subjective. You either have them or you don't. You can either add the space or you can't.

Planners do not have a say in your project and your neighbours do not have the right to object either. These rights give you the confidence to proceed with your project without fear of it being vetoed.

You are in control.

### 3. UNIQUE

PD Rights are also unique because they enable you to do things to your property that you wouldn't be able to do under full planning.

But PD Rights are not a poor man's planning permission.

They are an extensive set of legal allowances that provide you specific development opportunities that are not available to those who do not have PD Rights.

### 4. VALUABLE

Whether you intend to develop or not, the PD Rights attached to your home are definitely relevant.

By understanding what PD Rights are attached to your property you can:

1. Discover the TRUE VALUE of your home – by defining how it can be maximised.
2. Increase your chances of selling your property at the best price – by matching its potential to more prospective buyers.
3. Buy better properties – by identifying those with the best genuine development potential, allowing you to de-risk your purchase and grow into your new home.

Remember that you own PD Rights and they cost you nothing – but can save you money and can make you money.

### 5. VAST

Of the 18 million houses in England and Wales over 90% have PD Rights attached to them.

PD Rights allow the average household to add:

- **75% extra space**
- **30% in value**

All without the need for planning permission.

# The Trouble with Permitted Development

However, all of this comes with a warning: understanding your PD Rights can be very difficult.

## 1. Complex

The General Permitted Development Order and the technical guidance documents, available on our website – which is the legislation defining PD Rights – are highly complex documents which is at times unclear and difficult to understand.

## 2. Demanding

Understanding your PD Rights is also an extremely challenging task.

You need to obtain the full planning history of your property and identify its original state or its state on July 1st 1948.

You also need to understand other things that may be attached to your property, such as restrictive covenants or Tree Preservation Orders – especially if you are in a conservation area, if you live in a very new or high density housing development or if you have carried out previous works.

You will need to understand the spatial status of the property both in terms of its layout and volume and take into account its relation to curtilage, highways and public paths.

Then you will need to interpret the General Permitted Development Order mentioned above and qualify your PD allowances to check whether your proposed development falls within those allowances.

In other words: a very tough task.

## 3. Political

Local Planning Authorities can often be resistant to PD Rights because they sit in direct opposition to the wider development frameworks for their particular borough.

Also, planning staff are not always forthcoming in offering the best advice and can sometimes be misleading and inconsistent.

Increasingly, Local Planning Authorities are not providing advice on whether you need planning permission – and in many cases are charging for advice in this area and encouraging you to submit a full planning application to be safe.

# Helping You with Permitted Development

As we have seen, PD Rights are complex.

Understanding them before you consider any property purchase or renovation works is absolutely essential.

## This is where Aztech comes in.

We have developed a simple 3-step process which enables you to Qualify, Analyse and Transform the potential in your home by utilising your Permitted Development Rights.

Explore our site to find out more.

And read on for our A-Z of Permitted Development , which shows in detail many of the ways in which PD Rights enable you to improve, extend and renovate your home.

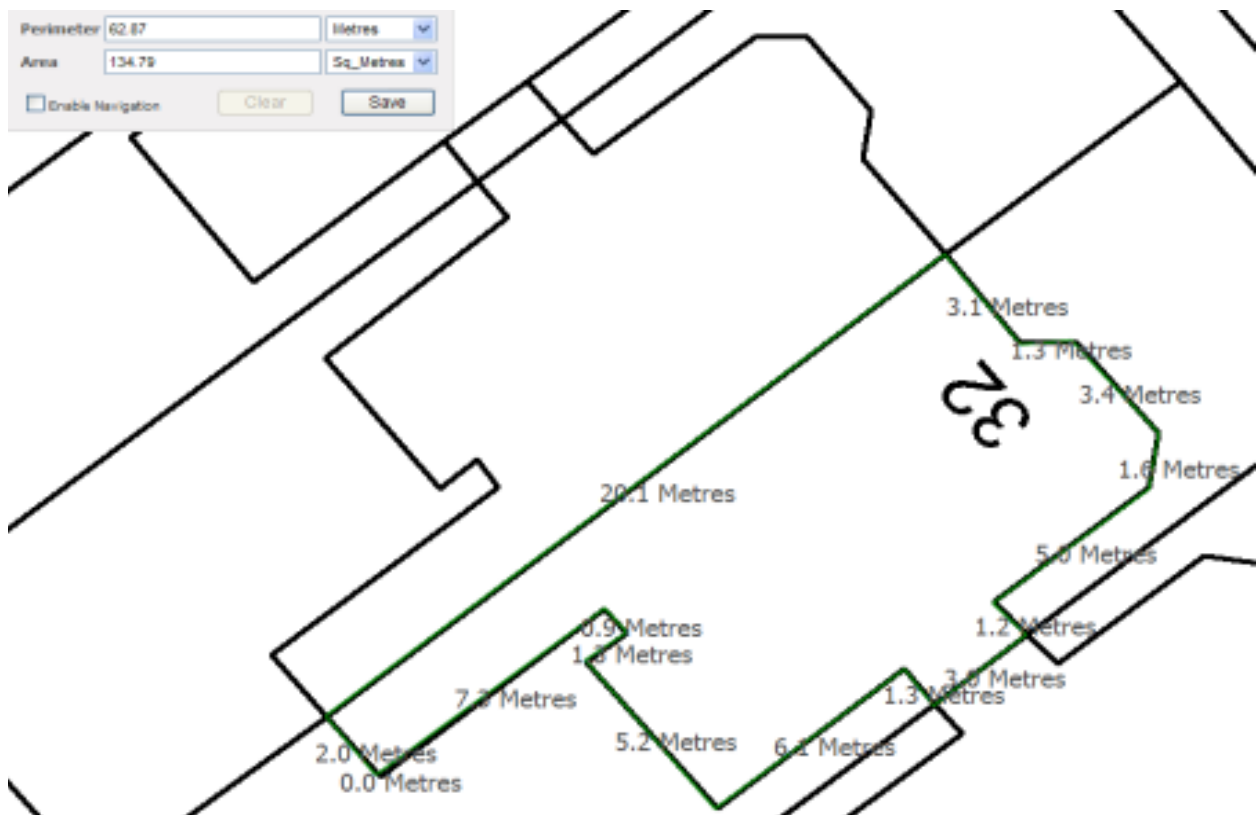


**Permitted Development Rights enable you to transform your home in a whole variety of ways, and all without the need for planning permission.**

**Take a look at our following comprehensive guide to see exactly what you could do with your PD Rights.**

“Its simple... call us and we will carry out a desktop research of this potential for you, we use state of the art digital mapping systems to identify the footprint, area and dimensions of your existing property and site.”

As most sites and properties hold a unique footprint, there is also detailed technical guidance on our website which should explain every possible option to you.



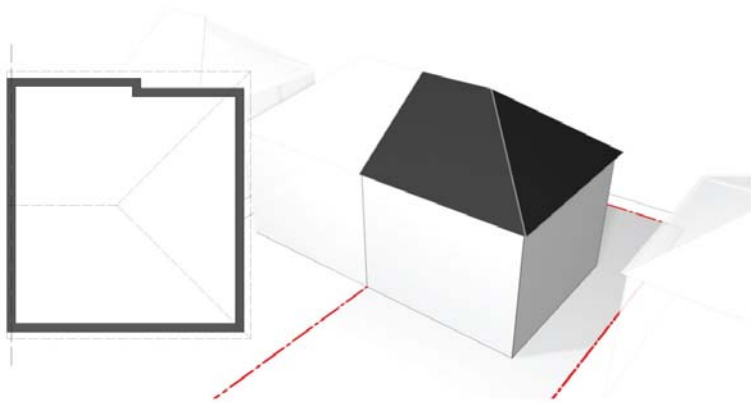
## 1.LOFTS

If you are planning to maximise the space in your home the loft space is a good place to start.

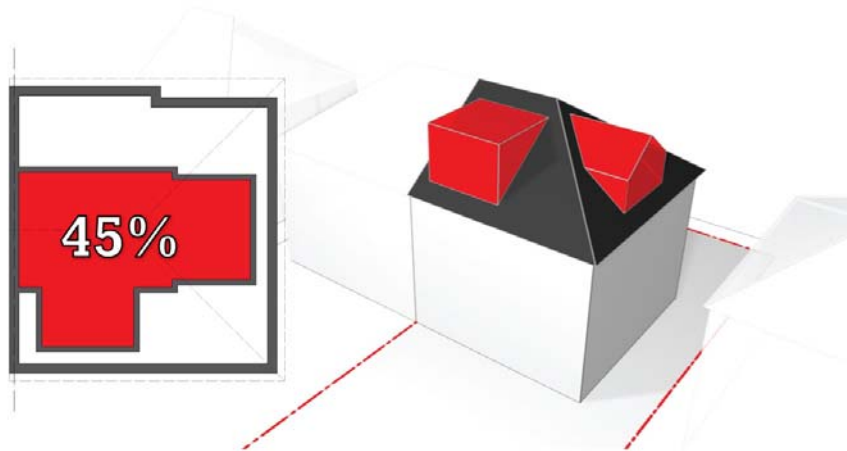
It normally includes 50% of the total floor area of a typical house – plus, the works don't require foundations and the space always has the best views and the best natural light.

By using your PD Rights you have no restrictions on adding glazing in the form of windows, roof lights or veluxes, which enables you to maximise the light and aspect of any conversion.

And even better: a loft conversion built under PD Rights will provide a lot more usable floorspace than one approved under the restrictions of full planning.



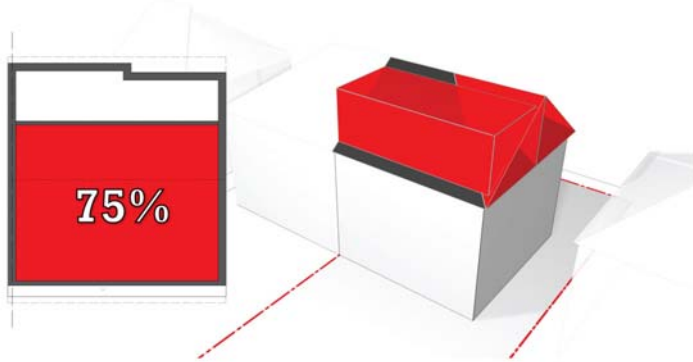
**1.1 Typical Full Planning solution: 45% effective, dormers have to comply with the residential design guidelines and as such are normally quite small.**



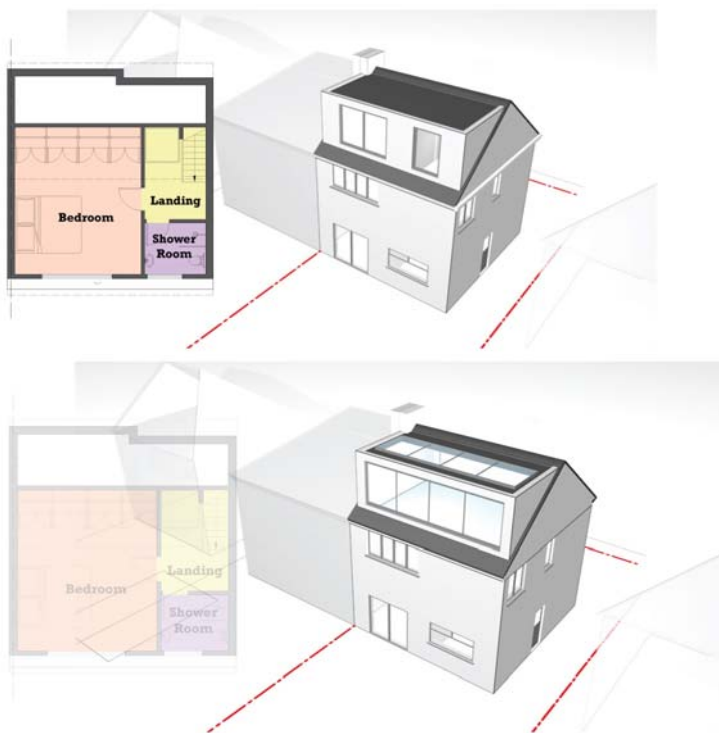
The basic restrictions for side and rear dormer loft conversion are;

the cubic content of the additional roof extensions would exceed the cubic content of the original roof space by more than 40 cubic metres in the case of a terraced house, or 50 cubic metres in any other case. Any dormer on the principal elevation of your property [ normally where the front door is ] normally would require planning permission.

### **1.2 Permitted Development solution: 75% effective. Hip to gable end conversion with a full width rear dormer all within 50 m<sup>3</sup>**



### **1.3 Permitted Development has greater allowances for glazing and rooflights**



## 2. EXTENSIONS

You can now add single-storey side and rear extensions and in some cases two-storey extensions, all without the need for planning permission.

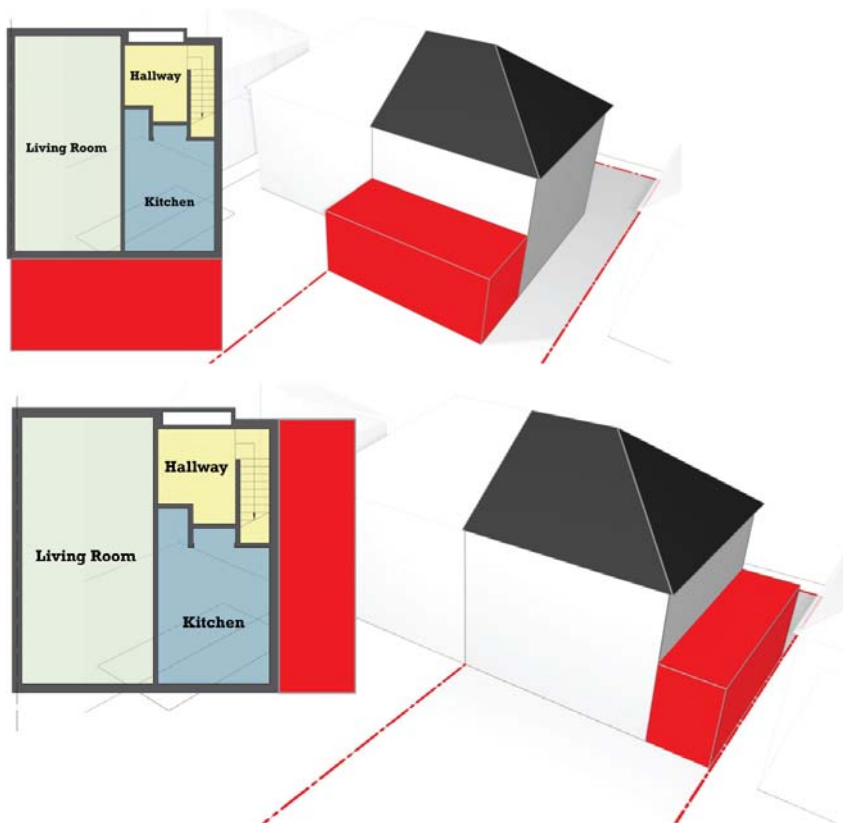
There is no restriction on the arrangement of the glazing to single and two storey extensions – which enables you to create really stunning additions to your home that would most likely be refused under the full planning regime. However glazing will need to comply with the building regulations.

The basic restrictions for rear single storey extensions are;  
The extension can be 3 metres in depth [ or 4 metres on a detached property ] and full width of the property.

The basic restrictions for side single storey extensions are;  
The extension can be up to half the width of the property and extend the full length of the property, tiled roofs in all cases can be no higher than 4 metres. [ or 3 metres for a flat roof, excluding roof lanterns and parapet walls ]

These freedoms enable you to create mezzanines, double-height voids and unique glazing arrangements allowing you to personalise your projects and add real value.

### 2.1 Permitted Development rear & side extensions (single-storey)

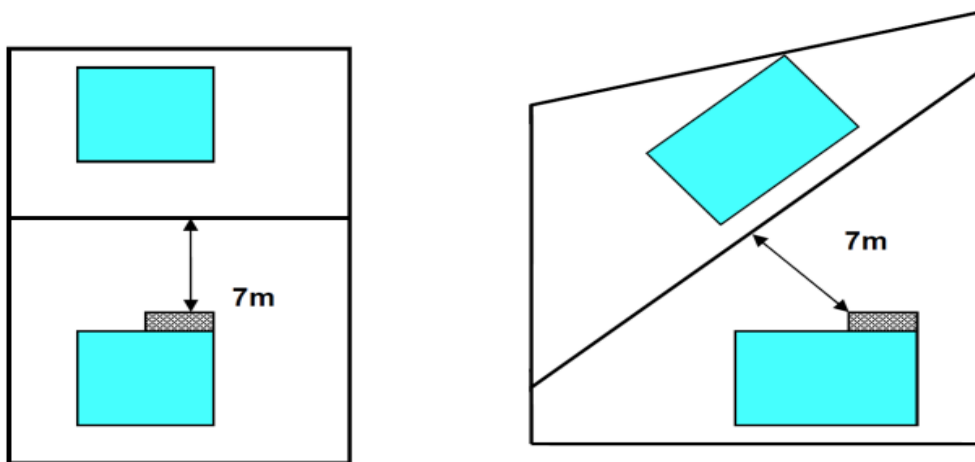


## 2.2 Permitted Development rear extension (two-storey) with PD Rights.



This design of extension is only really practical for larger detached and semi detached properties.

The basic restrictions for rear two storey extensions are;  
The extension can be 3 metres in projection depth and the first floor extension part of the structure must be more than two metres away from any boundary. The rear wall must also be a minimum of seven metres away from the boundary of the land surrounding any house opposite.



The examples above detail a traditional semi detached property with a simple, original rectangular footprint with a hipped roof.

There are many different types of property and if you explore our technical guidance document on our website [ Pages 17 – 27 ] it will explain alternative footprints of how you can extend your property in your particular scenario.

### 3. OUT BUILDINGS

You can create new outbuildings under PD Rights – a fantastic way of adding significantly to the square footage of your property.

As long as their use is directly related to the main house you can add home offices, garden rooms, games room and swimming pools, all without the need for planning permission.

The basic restriction is that the total area of ground covered by buildings, within the curtilage (other than the original dwellinghouse) would exceed 50% of the total area of the curtilage (excluding the ground area of the original dwellinghouse);

Recent PD Rights reform means you can create spaces that visually connect to the rear of the house – and, if well-designed, can create a private courtyard space between the rear elevation and the new outbuilding.

This is a great way to create a private and quite home office whilst still connect you to the family environment – meaning, for example, you can keep an eye on the kids while you work in a quiet, well-ordered space.

#### 3.1 Permitted Development outbuilding to create a courtyard space



## 4. FRONT GARDENS

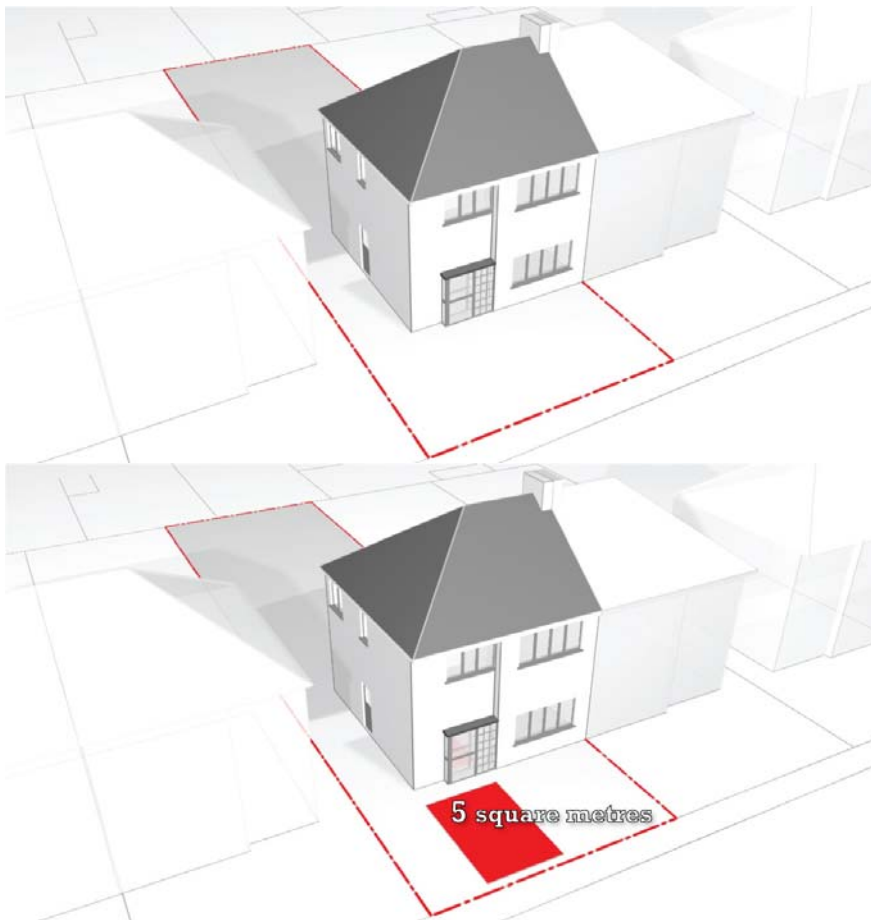
There are a number of opportunities (and restrictions) that may apply to your development of your front garden, some key examples of which are given below.

### (a) Off-Street Parking

You may be surprised to learn that you can add off-street parking to your property without the need for planning permission.

This is a great way to add value to your home – although it will have a major impact on the way your front garden looks and will of course eat up the space you have. The new hard surface must be water permeable so as rainwater does not run into the public drainage system.

#### 4(a) Permitted Development hardstanding for parking allowance



### (b) Walls, Fences and High Hedges

You can also add walls, fences and gates to the front and side boundary of your garden. Fences, walls and gates used within the limits of Permitted Development – combined with some clever planting – will really help you make the most of these often small but important spaces.

Front walls will be limited to 1m and the side walls to 2m – although anything higher and you will need to apply for planning permission.

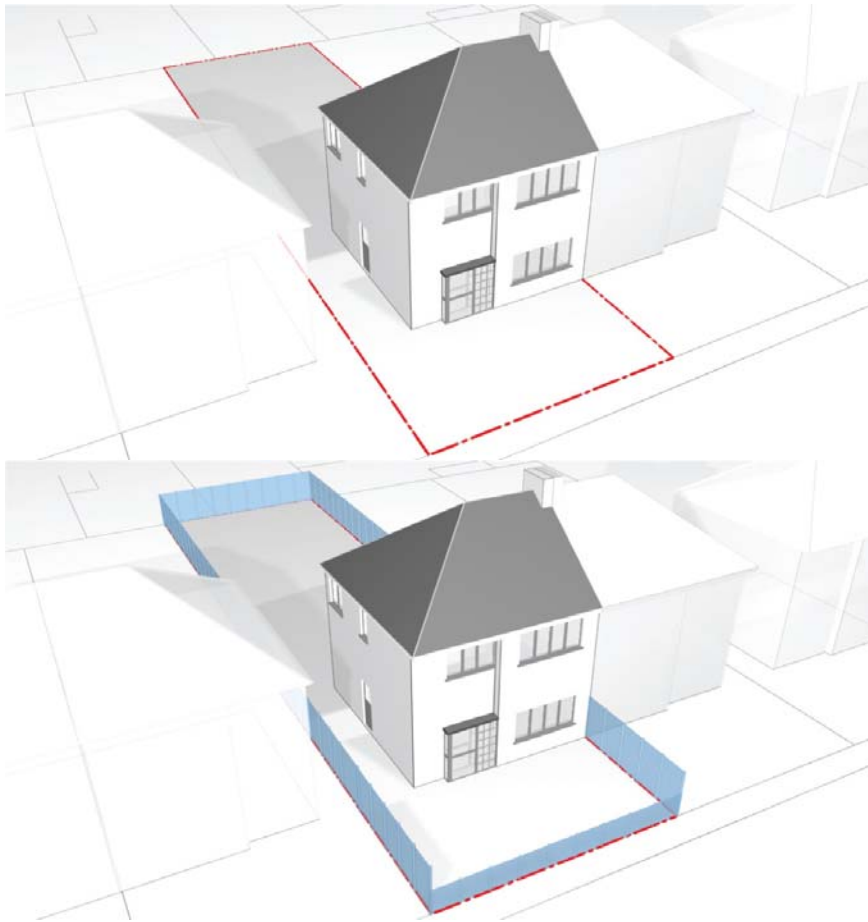
These are no official restrictions on the height of hedges, but new legislation has been brought in to protect your neighbours' amenity and right to light.

What this means is that whilst there are no precise limits, if you do plant a tall hedge or line of trees that annoy the neighbours they now have the right to complain to the council.

Part 8 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 (which came into operation in England on the 1st June 2005) can impose a fine of £1,000, although the application fee to start this process is deliberately very high so as to encourage an amicable solution between you and your neighbour.

The best thing to do – as with any works – is to be neighbourly and have a chat about your plans.

#### **4(b) Permitted Development limits for walls and fences**



## (c) Porches

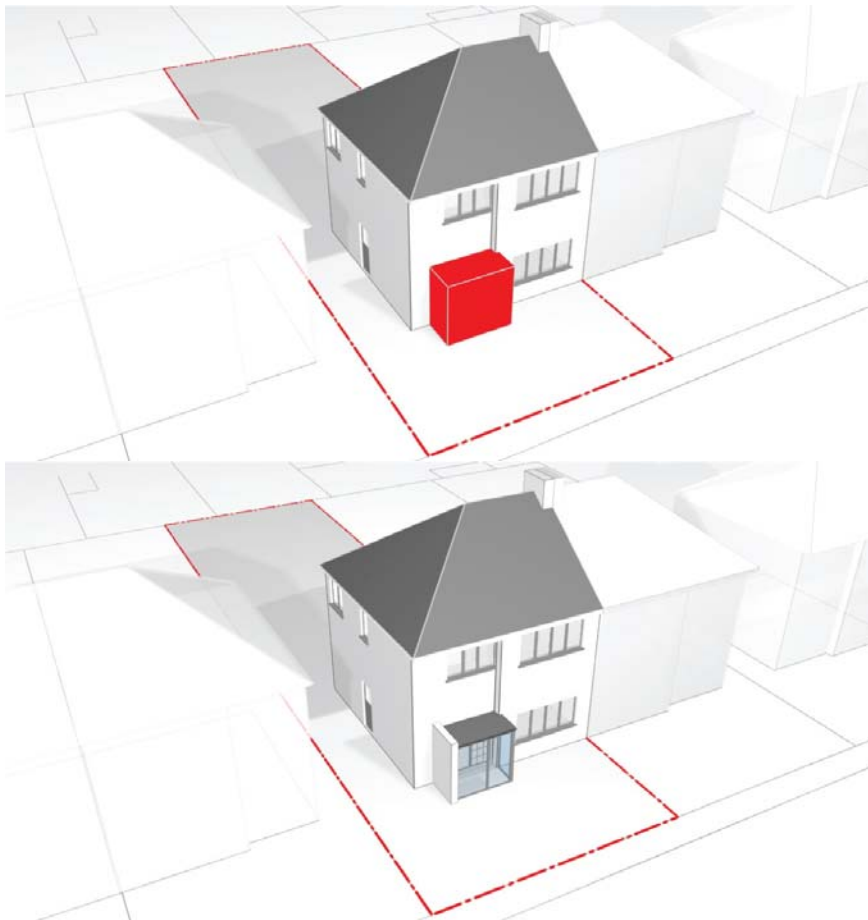
PD Rights allow you to add porches to any external door, including the front door. This is a great way of creating additional storage for boots and coats, and it can also act as a good sound and heat buffer to the outside.

The basic restrictions for porches are;

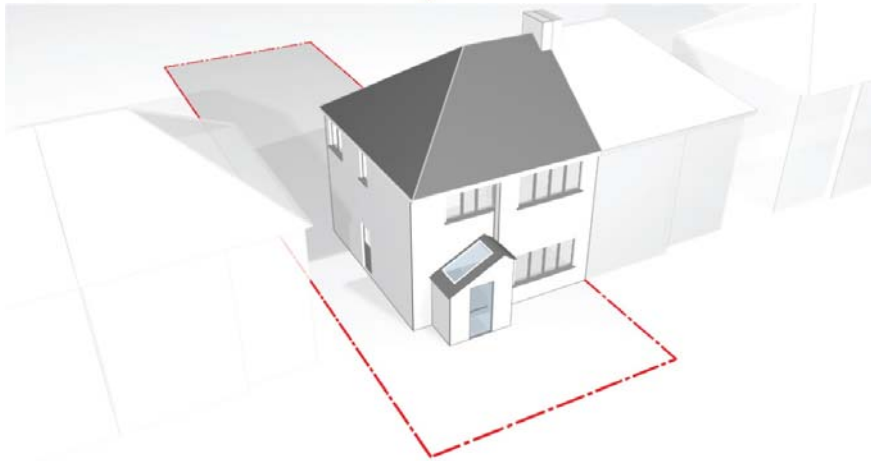
the ground area (measured externally) of the structure would exceed 3 square metres, any part of the structure would be more than 3 metres above ground level; or any part of the porch would be within 2 metres of any boundary of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse with a highway.

A new entrance lobby can enhance a property's charm or make a bold impact. This can add real curb appeal and help characterise the style of your garden project.

### 4(c)(i) Permitted Development porch allowance to any external door



**4(c)(ii) Permitted Development porch styles, traditional & modern  
(a few of many)**



## 5. BACK GARDENS

There are a number of opportunities (and restrictions) that may apply to your development of your back garden, some key examples of which are given below.

### (a) Outbuildings

It's possible to retrofit existing garages and outbuildings under Permitted Development, without the need for planning permission.

More importantly, you can add new structures in the garden for the purpose of play rooms, home offices or swimming pools.

They must not be higher than 4m if dual-pitched or 3m if flat-roofed, and within 2m of the boundary the eaves height can be no greater than 2.5m.

Other restrictions apply depending on a number of factors, but in general it is possible to add some serious square footage to your home by adding an outbuilding, which – when combined with a considered garden design – can really enhance your living space.

### (b) Raised platforms and pagodas

If you want to incorporate raised platforms in your garden, the golden rule is no higher than 300mm or you will need planning permission. (You may remember some recent press coverage about tree houses and kids' garden apparatus that now requires planning permission.)

Your limits for pagodas are typically 4m if pitched, 3m if flat and limited to 2.5m if within 2m of the boundary.

You can still build a pergola in a conservation area but more onerous restrictions apply.

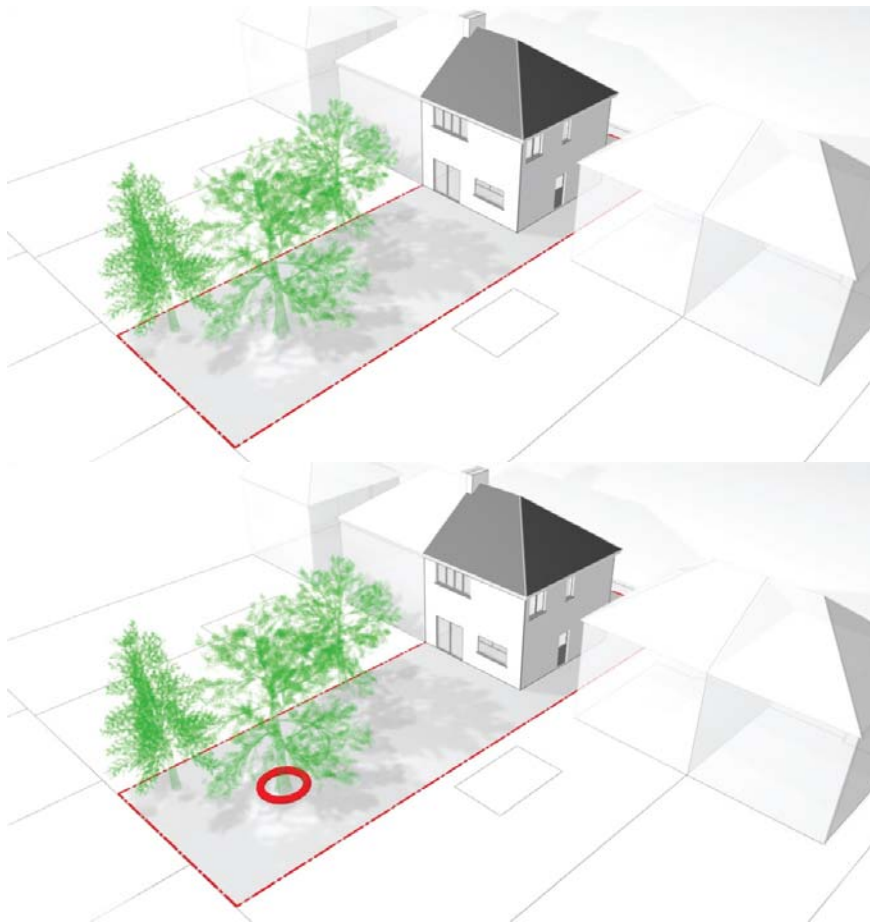
### **(c) TPOs (Tree Preservation Orders)**

If you are planning to revamp your back garden, you need to consider if there any Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) within the legal boundary of the property.

If there are, this will prevent you from removing or building close to them.

So if you're planning some decking, an outbuilding or new fencing it's essential that you clarify whether you own any trees with TPOs attached to them.

### **5(c) TPOs (Tree Preservation Orders)**



## **(d) Microgeneration**

Our homes account for 27% of our country's total carbon emissions – a huge amount.

Because of this the government has extended your Permitted Development rights to include microgeneration technologies.

This means you can now add solar panels, PV panels, ground-source heat pumps and much more without the need for planning permission.

You can add these to your house, your garden and on outbuildings.

These technologies should be considered when you are planning a garden project which may include a shed or out building.

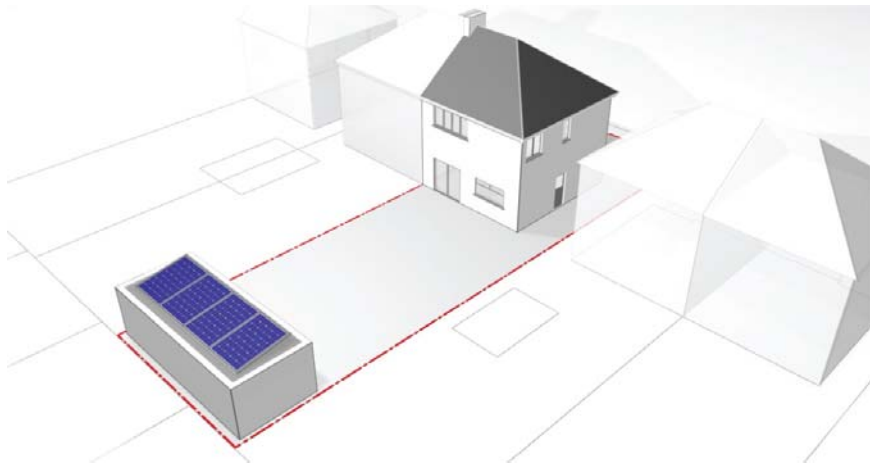
In the future these technologies will become more common and more desirable to buyers as they minimise energy bills and have a certain cache.

The tendency is to always slap them on the house, but this can be a mistake as it can restrict future home improvements like loft conversion and the insertion of roof lights.

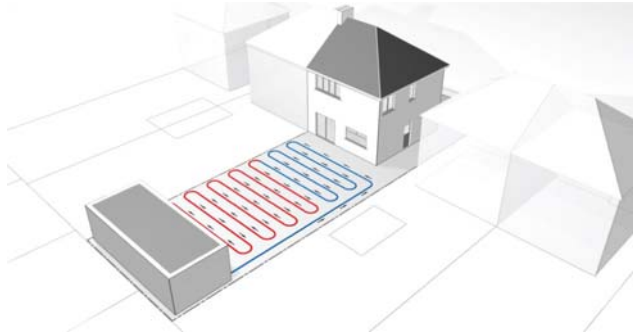
It's also a good idea to consider placing these technologies on or in outbuildings and garages as some of them can be quite noisy, especially ground-source heat pumps and CHP's (Combined Heat & Power).

In the not too distant future buyers will demand a good place to store recycling, composting, bio-fuels and microgeneration technologies.

### **4(d)(i) Microgeneration technologies afforded by Permitted Development (Solar Water)**



#### 4(d)(ii) Microgeneration technologies afforded by Permitted Development (PV & Ground-Source)

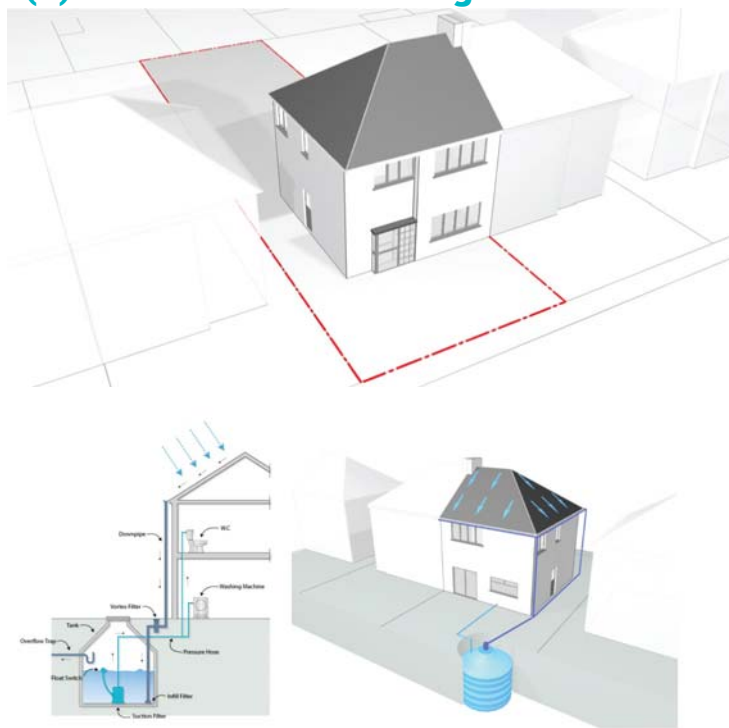


#### (e) Rainwater harvesting

If you're undertaking major landscaping works and getting in some heavy digging equipment it's worth considering a rainwater harvesting tank.

These are a great addition to any garden and home and if you switch to a water meter it can save you lots of money in the summer.

#### 4(e) Rainwater harvesting



## 6.LAYOUT

Before you start thinking about adding loft conversions, extensions and outbuildings at great expense, take a closer look at the available space you already have.

It is possible to dramatically transform your home just by re-planning the space you already own.

Using your PD Rights enables you to move, remove or add internal walls, floors, windows and doors to add light and space. Please ensure you discuss your proposal with Aztech or Building Control prior to carrying out any building works as although Planning Permission may not be required,, building regulation permission may be.

### Example:

- In a recent project clients wanted to make the most of the space they already had.
- The house had a very large footprint but had been previously re-furbished in a very hap-hazard way.
- A few simple changes totally transformed house and delivered a huge amount of extra space just by applying some simple space planning rules and by using the PD Rights attached to the property.



Basements are also worth remembering here. You can convert an existing basement in your home using your PD Rights. However, this is a complex area and we recommend you get in touch with us to discuss this.

## 7. GARAGES

These spaces often represent about 25-30% of the footprint of your house and to have this much space serving little or no function can be a waste.

Under Permitted Development, you are able to convert integrated garages, you can change include doors or windows and you can remove internal walls to connect the space to the rest of the house.

It's often a great place to position a new home office under the new front window or site a utility room in the centre space – a space that receives no natural light and so is well suited to this function.

Many Victorian houses have small annexes or lean-to's attached to the rear of the property and these can also be converted under your Rights to maximise the space you already have and improve the light in the kitchen at the rear of the property.

### 7.1 One example of a garage allowed under Permitted Development Rights



## 8. GLAZING

You can add extensive glazing to the roof space of your home under Permitted Development.

This can be a great way to brighten up dull spaces and connect the loft space to the best views in the house.

If your ridge height is sufficient then you can create an habitable space which often works well as a play room, study or guest bedroom.

Remember a loft is often half the total square footage in your home and doesn't need foundations to be improved.

However, if your ridge height is restricted then you can still add roof lights and veluxes and connect the space to the floor below.

This really enhances bedrooms and creates unique spaces that can transform the typical domestic set up.

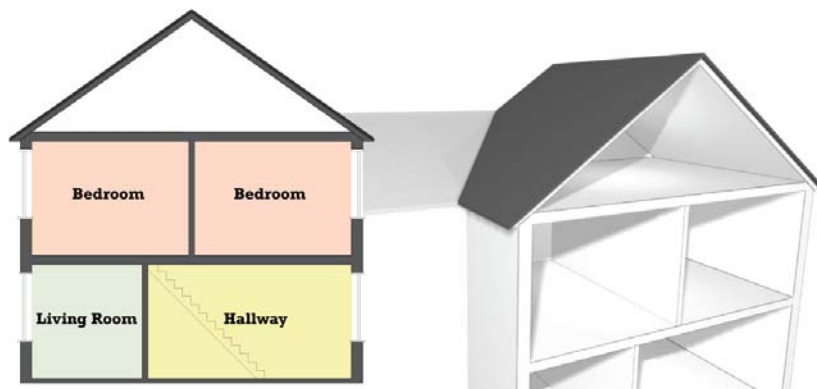
Simply by removing a few ceilings and adding some veluxes you can transform a bog-standard bedroom into a stunning master en-suite.

This really adds value and saleability – and it can give you that 'wow' space you want.

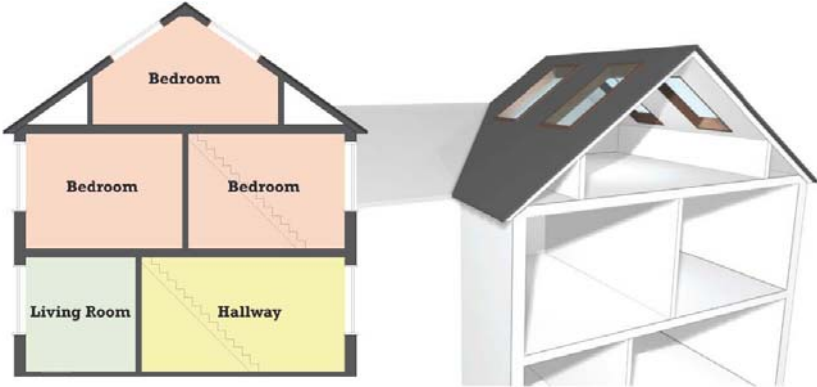
The same principle can apply to bathrooms.

With a relatively small budget you can move away from the standard rectilinear spaces we are all used to and create genuine uniqueness ... looking at the stars whilst in the bath!

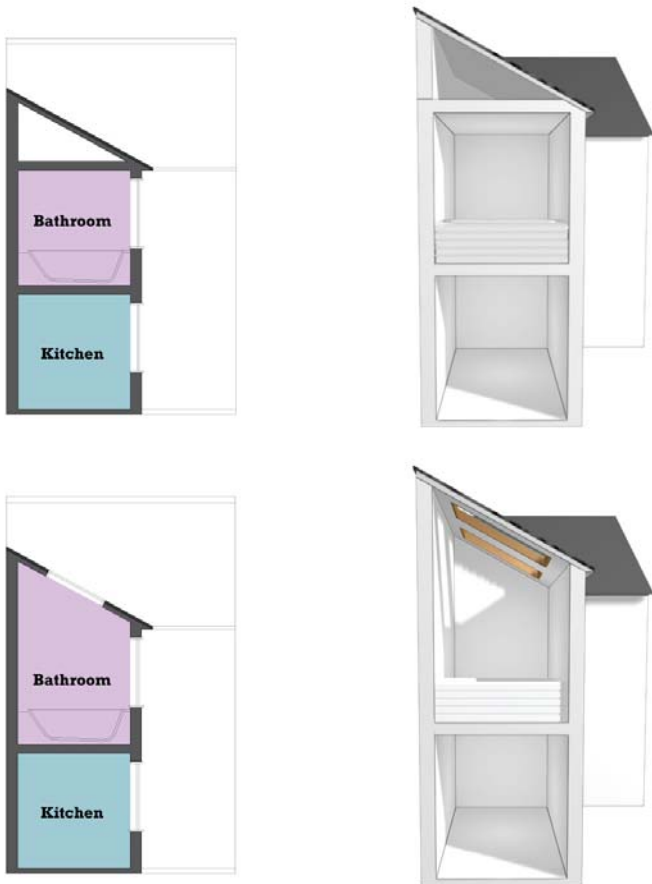
### 8.1(a) Creating unique bedroom or study spaces (inexpensively) through Permitted Development Rights



**8.1(b) Creating unique bedroom or study spaces (inexpensively) through Permitted Development Rights**



**8.2 Creating unique bathrooms by top-lighting through Permitted Development Rights**



What do I do now?

Aztech has developed a simple 3-step process which enables you to Qualify, Analyse and Transform the potential in your home by utilising your Permitted Development Rights.

**Explore our site to find out more, or get in touch**

**T1: 0117 907 1465      Bristol, Central and South West enquiries**

**T2: 0208 535 1036      London and South East enquiries**

**T3: 07973 114 427      Site mobile**

**F1: 0871 661 6157**

**E1: [mail@123plans.co.uk](mailto:mail@123plans.co.uk)**

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