

## PLANNING

### **New Government Regulations simplifying householder development**

Extensions and loft conversions are one of the main ways to increase the value of a residential property. Until now the rules, known as permitted development rights, for what is permissible in planning terms have been restrictive and complicated. These Permitted Development rights have been reviewed, resulting in a new Development Order which comes into force on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008 which will mean that the majority of homeowners will no longer need to get planning permission when extending their houses.

The new rules will allow both loft conversions and rear extensions based on straightforward measurements for what is permissible. Non overbearing loft conversions will enjoy automatic permission, although there will still be an overall volume cap. Rear extensions will no longer have volume caps.

Local Authorities will be able to introduce local variations to allow bigger extensions or to restrict development where necessary.

The Government has also published the new planning regulations designed to reduce flood risks caused by surface water run offs. Under these changes new driveways or parking areas over five square metres will not need planning permission provided they are constructed using surfaces which allow the water to soak through to the ground.

Driveways of more than five square metres using traditional, impermeable

surfaces will now require planning permission.

For more information, or if you are uncertain as to whether your proposed development would still require planning permission following on from the new regime, contact Bernadette Hillman in our planning team: [bh@dolegal.co.uk](mailto:bh@dolegal.co.uk).

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