

# Building Control in Herefordshire Worcestershire &

The Authorities of North Worcestershire, Herefordshire, and South Worcestershire work closely together to provide a consistent approach to the Building Control function.

For further information about the services that we provide please contact your local office.

**North Worcestershire Building Control**  
01527 881402

**Herefordshire Council**  
01432 261940

**South Worcestershire Building  
Control Partnership**  
01684 862328



## Local Authority Building Control

(LABC) is dedicated to maintaining the highest standards in building design and construction. It is based on a publicly accountable and independent service, ensuring that buildings comply with relevant legal requirements for health and safety.

We aim to assist you in producing high quality buildings in a time scale which keeps your costs to a minimum by providing a fast, efficient and cost effective building control service. Our surveyors have wide technical expertise, extensive knowledge of materials and construction methods as well as access to very valuable local records. Discussions at an early stage with our building control surveyors can help identify problems, provide cost saving innovative solutions whilst guaranteeing that confidentiality will always be maintained.

LABC Surveyors have established links with other local authority services. Development Teams with members from other services e.g. planning, building control, and highways for example, can usually be brought together to give a streamlined service with only one point of contact – most often a building control surveyor. The emphasis is on avoiding difficulties.

LABC has the experience and technical skill to ease you through the building process. With the assurance of the highest quality and standards you can trust, at a speed and cost to meet your schedule and budget.

For further details about LABC services and Value Added Products please contact your Local Authority

Nov 11

Advice Leaflet 5

## Garage Conversion to Habitable room



# Conversion of Garage to Habitable Room

## Introduction

The conversion of a garage into a living space is treated as a change of part of a building. An application for approval under the Building Regulations must be made before work commences. The submission of a Building Notice may be an appropriate way to achieve this (Advice Leaflet 1)

It is not possible to be precise in the advice we give regarding to garage conversions as individual circumstances vary. Building Control Staff would be pleased to advise you further.

The following points must be considered when converting a garage into a living space

## Foundations

A foundation may be required to carry any additional masonry loads such as a new inner leaf to external walls or the garage door infill. The condition and suitability of the existing foundation/floor can be checked when the door area is excavated.

## Wall Thickness

If the existing wall is of a single leaf construction with brick piers it must be checked for stability and freedom from defects. If deemed satisfactory then it is likely that the wall would be considered suitable, subject to its weather resistance and insulation

## Weather Resistance

A wall of single leaf construction must be treated to provide satisfactory resistance to the passage of moisture. A waterproofing compound applied on the internal face and incorporated into a floor membrane may be an effective way of achieving this. The provision of an inner leaf to create a cavity wall will require a cavity tray at the base of the wall and over any openings.

New and Existing floors should also have a suitable damp proof membrane.

## Floors

It is often desirable to increase the floor height of the existing garage level with the existing ground floor of the house.

This can be achieved by making up the thickness in either concrete or timber.

Concrete can be laid directly onto the existing slab on a bed of insulation and damp proof membrane.

Timber battens should be tanalised and laid over a rigid floor insulation on the existing slab on a dpm. A vapour barrier may then be laid over the joists/under the boarding.

The damp proof membrane should be dressed continuous with any damp proof course to new or existing walls

## Insulation

It may be necessary to insulate the external walls, roof and floor to habitable standards.

**New Windows** should achieve a U Value of at least 1.8W/m<sup>2</sup>K for timber or PVC frames. This can normally be achieved with a sealed double glazed unit incorporating a 16mm air gap and with an inner pane of low-E type glass

**Walls** should be upgraded to provide a U Value of around 0.30W/m<sup>2</sup>K. This could be achieved by dry lining the wall but the performance of each insulation type differs and therefore further advice should be obtained.

**Floors** should be upgraded to provide a U Value of around 0.22W/m<sup>2</sup>K. This can be achieved with various types of floor insulation.

**The roof** should also be upgraded to provide a U Value of around 0.20W/m<sup>2</sup>K for a flat roof or 0.16W/m<sup>2</sup>K where there is a loft.

## Ventilation

Windows must incorporate an openable area of an area equal to 1/20th of the floor area of the room, and trickle vents to provide background ventilation of 8000mm<sup>2</sup> for a habitable room (4000mm<sup>2</sup> elsewhere. Mechanical Ventilation may also be required if a kitchen, utility, bathroom or WC is being created

## Means of Escape

Generally a clear opening of 0.33m<sup>2</sup> and with an opening width and height of at least 450mm should be provided if the room can only be accessed via another room. The cill of such an opening should be below 1100mm above floor level