



‘Don’t try to cram too much into your space’



Hugo Tugman (Tugman.co.uk), founder of Architect Your Home and MD of Tugman Architects & Designers, gives his tips on converting your space:

‘Several factors need to combine for a successful loft space. Layout, daylight, orientation, structure, headroom and staircase are all important – it’s

no use getting only one right. For example, you can work out a layout for a new bedroom and landing. However, when you figure out how the stairs will arrive on the floor below, it does not work. You then change the position downstairs and it ruins the arrangement above.

‘Some lofts are not worth converting, usually because there is not enough height. It is rare for planning authorities to let you raise the ridge height of a roof. While the Building Regulations have no minimum ceiling height, they require a minimum of two metres of headroom over a staircase. In some lofts with restricted height, the top of the stairs often take up the best space, leaving the room you’re trying to convert as an awkward space. The best way to get additional height is to consider lowering the ceilings of the rooms below.

‘Don’t try to cram too much in. Often a loft is compromised because people try to shoehorn two bedrooms and a bathroom in. Beware: plans for lofts can make them look bigger than they really will be as they show the whole floor space and don’t indicate the areas under low parts of a sloping ceiling that are unuseable as accommodation, though these low areas do afford great storage opportunities.

‘A common mistake is to think about the cost of the main moves and ignore the sum of all the smaller bits. A lot of companies give a price for the ‘shell’ as the shell represents 50 per cent of the cost – but all the wiring, heating, basins, tiling and so on will add up if you’re not careful.’