

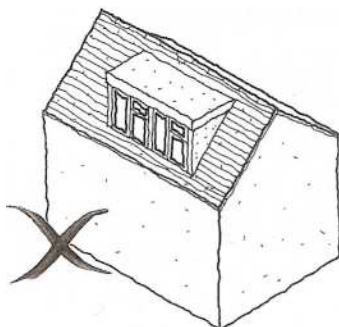
DORMERS & ROOFLIGHTS



DORMERS

Dormers are a fairly common feature in Cornwall especially on smaller cottages. A room-in-roof has the advantage of making the most of a building's volume, and often creates an interesting and characterful space. However, the external appearance needs careful consideration - modern dormers are often far too large, of ugly materials and of inappropriate styles for traditional and new houses alike.

Building Regulation permission will be required for a dormer and in most circumstances, for the installation of rooflights. The window or rooflight openings may be required to be used for emergency escape if there is a fire in the building. Under these circumstances there are restrictions on the minimum size of the opening and the distance from the eaves of the building.



Avoid big boxy dormers



Modern cottage style house. The barge boards are rather too deep, but the overall effect successful.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Dormers should be considerably smaller in scale than the main roof. Smaller, separate dormers look better than one large one.
- **Retain and repair** old dormers rather than reconstruct or modernise.
- Dormers will not be appropriate at all on some historic or Listed Buildings where their inclusion would be detrimental to character and style. Any work carried out on Listed Buildings or on Conservation Areas is required to be of the highest standard in terms of materials and detailing.
- Flat roof dormers create a jarring ‘boxy’ shape and are not appropriate.
- Installation of dormers should not be attempted if extensive alterations to an old roof structure is required.
- Barge boards and stop ends are modern details and create a top-heavy effect. Design out or minimise these elements.
- Consider the positions of any new dormers in relation to the windows beneath. Their width, finish and glazing pattern should match those on the rest of the facade.



The use of dormers can reduce the apparent scale of a building to one and a half storeys.



Pitched' dormers are the most typical in the area but are more complicated to construct. Note the small scale of the dormer compared to the window on the main facade. Lead or slate are suitable materials for the dormer cheeks.



A modern hipped dormer with mitred real slate hips and cheeks. The fascias are rather too deep on this example. The use of hipped dormers helps to merge the element into the roof.

ROOFLIGHTS

Rooflights are sometimes an acceptable alternative to dormers but must be used with restraint, and preferably on rear roof slopes, especially on older properties.

- Use the correct flashing for slate roofs so that the rooflight sits into the roof, not perched on the surface.
- Restrict the size and number of rooflights visible on any roof slope.
- Use rooflights with a vertical emphasis, or a ‘Conservation’ pattern with an additional vertical glazing bar.



Rooflight of vertical format, neat, set into the roof