

LABC

Technical View

Guidance on creating a consistent approach to dealing with conservatory reroof work under an LABC Registered Detail

LABC has produced this document to assist local authorities in their consideration of applications to replace a translucent conservatory with any LABC Registered Detail for solid proprietary roof systems. It should be read in conjunction with the **current LABC's guidance on solid roofs to conservatories or porches attached to dwellings 1st August 2013**. The guidance has been ratified by the LABC national Technical Working Group and is intended for use by LABC members only. Where work is being carried out in addition to the reroofing other matters may require further consideration.

This addendum is necessary to ensure consistency in interpretation at submission and inspections stages from LA teams. Lack of consistency can cause difficulties for those companies operating on a regional or national basis and result in work lost to Approved Inspectors. This guidance note offers recommendations on how an application should be treated. This guidance is restricted to a structure less than 30m² at ground floor and thermally separated from the main residence with external quality doors.

The release of the **DCLG Circular on 29th July 2013 'Conservatories and Porches'** clarified that certain work to an existing conservatory may no longer benefit from exemption. In particular if it involved a significant reduction in the amount of glazing to the roof or walls. The circular stated: "Where the relevant building control body decides that the extension is no longer an exempt conservatory or porch, regulations 4(1) and 4(3) of the Building Regulations would apply. This would mean that the work itself would need to comply with the applicable requirements of Schedule 1 (regulation 4(1)). It would also mean that the conservatory or porch must be no more unsatisfactory in relation to the requirements in Schedule 1 than before the work was carried out (regulation 4(3))".

Building Regulation 4(1) states any work carried out must comply with the applicable requirements of schedule 1 and 4(3) so that any work must "be no worse than before the work was carried out". In this instance the building

work would be defined as work to the new roof and not the existing structure. Note that Regulation 5 'Material Change of Use' does not apply in any case where an existing exempt conservatory or porch is no longer exempt.

The local authority is recommended to limit its observations and check to:

- The roofs structural design
- How roof loads are transmitted through the existing structure
- Adequacy of foundations
- Resistance of the roof together with any junctions to the existing structure to moisture, ventilation and thermal performance.

It is considered that this work will not affect the existing structure of the conservatory providing the principles above are taken into account. Accordingly the existing conservatory should be no more unsatisfactory in relation to compliance than before the re-roofing work was carried out. As such the application would not require further work to the existing structure such as upgrading of thermal performance to the walls and floors, installation of cavity trays or removal of an existing heating system.

The table below highlights the relevant parts of the regulations that apply and where reliance can be placed on a Registered Detail to demonstrate compliance.

In addition the following points illustrate some practical solutions to assist in determining how to deal with this type of application

- There is no restriction on the amount of glazing to the walls from what is in place already
- The conservatory should remain thermally separated from the dwelling
- Carry out a visual examination of the existing conservatory to assess for signs of distress/failure in the structure. If none noted it is unlikely the minimal additional load (less than 10% over a typical translucent roof) will cause a failure of the structure to the conservatory. If the structure shows no sign of distress the existing foundations are likely to be adequate to carry the small additional loadings regardless of the depth the foundations have been placed at and no additional requirements should be imposed with regard to foundation depths.
- Assess whether or not the existing glazing/door supports contain steel inserts to spread roof to the floor slab.