

## **ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING KITCHENS TO 1 AND 2 STOREY HOUSES**

This guidance is designed to help you if you are intending to carry out alterations to existing kitchens. There is no need to obtain a building warrant for the simple projects described in this leaflet, but the work you undertake must meet the requirements of the building regulations. The guidance will explain one way that this can be achieved, but it is also acceptable to use other solutions in meeting the building regulations.

This guidance does not cover houses which have a floor level higher than 4.5 m above outside ground level, and does not apply to flats or maisonettes. It also does not cover more complex work, for example where you intend to remove a loadbearing wall. Such work will require a warrant and you should check with the Building Standards team. It is against the law to start work without first obtaining a building warrant when one is needed.

### **1. CHANGING COOKER LOCATION**

If a cooker is relocated within a kitchen there must be a working (activity) space in front of the oven to allow the oven door to be opened safely. The working space must be 1 metre deep for the full width of the oven.

Any work to a gas installation must be carried out by a qualified person such as a CORGI registered installer. Any electrical installations must be carried out by a competent installer, for example a member of SELECT or NICEIC.

### **2. ADDING/CHANGING KITCHEN UNITS**

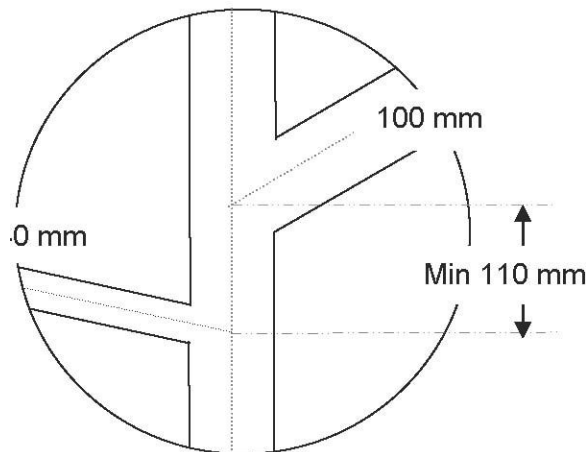
Building regulations cover only storage provision and this must not be less than 1m<sup>3</sup>. This is not particularly difficult to achieve and can easily be done by providing 4 or 5 floor or wall units of a normal size.

### **3. PLUMBING**

Fittings such as sinks, washing machines and dishwashers may be added to a kitchen in any number.

The waste pipes must be connected into an existing soil vent pipe or to a branch pipe leading to the soil vent pipe using proprietary connectors obtainable from a plumber's merchant.

Each appliance must be connected separately to the vent/branch pipe using a deep seal trapped 40 mm diameter plastic pipe. The pipe must be laid to a fall of not less than 1 in 60, towards the vent/branch pipe. The new appliance must not be more than 3 m from the vent pipe or branch pipe.

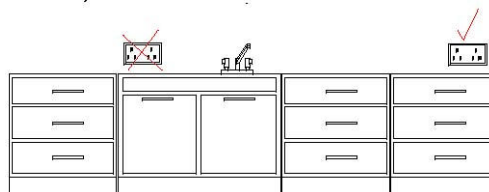


**Connection to existing vertical 100mm diameter stack/vent pipe (not to scale)**

#### 4. ELECTRICS

##### Sockets

There must be at least 6 electrical sockets in the kitchen although it is recommended that more are provided to cater for the increasing number of electrical appliances used in kitchens today. Sockets must not be located close to a sink so as to avoid wetting of electrical appliances which are plugged in, or located immediately behind a cooker hob for safety reasons. It is recommended that a 30 mA RCD (residual current device) be installed to the electrical circuit, to provide protection to socket outlets likely to feed portable equipment outdoors, (e.g. lawnmowers).



##### Recessed lights

It is important that the fittings are installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions particularly with regards to maintaining free air movement around the holder for cooling. Insulation or other materials within the roof space or floor void therefore should not be laid over these light fittings unless the manufacturer's instructions specifically permit. However, the existing insulation to the roof space must not be compromised by the addition of the recessed lights. When fitting the recessed lights, the floor/roof structure must not be affected.

#### 5. VENTILATION

##### Natural

Replacement windows must have an opening area of not less than the opening area of the original window. If the old window has a trickle ventilator than the replacement window must

also have a trickle ventilator of an equal size. If the old window did not have a trickle ventilator then it is not necessary to install one although it is strongly recommended that one is fitted to help control relative humidity in the room.

The replacement window must in all other respects meet the requirements of the building regulations.

### **Mechanical extract**

An extract fan does not need to be installed into an existing kitchen, but where there is a fan in the kitchen already, it must not be removed. Where a fan is fitted it must be ducted directly to the outside air and have an extraction rate of at least 60 litres per second, or 30 litres per second if the fan is located above the hob.

Extract fans that are installed to operate when the kitchen light is on and are in kitchens without a window, must be wired through an isolator switch to separate the light from the fan. This will allow the fan to be cleaned/ repaired whilst the light is on.

In the case where a mechanical extract fan is being fitted to the kitchen when previously there was not a fan, any replacement window to the kitchen need not meet the guidance for natural ventilation as the kitchen will be adequately ventilated via the new fan.

## **5. WALL/CEILING LININGS**

Redecoration of the kitchen will usually be carried out after substantial alterations have been carried out. Papering on existing plasterboard and repainting can be carried out without problem, however some wall or ceiling linings are not fire-retardant, such as polystyrene and can cause serious fire risks; care must be taken when considering their use. Where timber wall and ceiling linings are used they must be protected from fire spread by the application of a fire-retardant coating.

## **6. GENERAL**

You should ensure that you are aware of your statutory obligations under building regulations, planning legislation and any other relevant permission and that any firm or person employed to carry out work is competent.

The Scottish Government Building Standards Division provides guidance on how to comply with the building regulations and this can be accessed on their web site at <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/Building/Building-standards/techbooks/techhandbooks>