

# Need more space?

Need to maximise the space you have?  
We will develop your ideas, to provide a home you are proud of.

**eco**design  
consultants  
Architects & Environmental Consultants



Call today for a FREE  
no obligation consultation

Eco Design Consultants are a Chartered Architectural Practice Passionate about providing the right solution by combining architectural design and environmental knowledge, to provide economical, sustainable homes and buildings. We ensure the buildings give delight, are desirable, functional, easily maintained and affordable. Otherwise we believe true sustainability is not achieved.

#### Services Offered:

- Full architectural services
- Passive design (including PHPP)
- Day lighting and overshadowing analysis
- Code for Sustainable Homes Assessments
- Energy Performance certification
- Renewable Energy Strategies
- Psi Value cold bridge analysis

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## Eco Extensions and improvements

By Alan Budden, Eco Design Consultants Ltd.

### Desirable

It is no use having the most environmentally sustainable home ever if you don't use it, or enjoy it. Your home should lift your spirits making you happy and relaxed. It is probably the biggest investment you ever make, therefore it is worth every penny getting the design right, as changes later can be expensive and you don't want to be thinking "if only" for years to come.

As Kevin Mc Cloud puts it, "Employ an Architect and a good one at that – who shares your view of the world.... A good architect is free ... They'll cost you no money in the long term, because... they'll take your vision... and will give back your dream... larger than you ever thought possible... fully wrought and magnificently detailed... As a result, your home will be better and therefore worth more, and you will be happier. Now that is a secret of life."

### Environmentally sustainable

We all know that we should reduce our energy use to save the planet and save money, but what should you do first? Most

people already know to fit energy bulbs, insulated the loft, fit new windows, fit draft proofing, but is this the most efficient and cost effective thing for you? Every house is different and we all use our homes differently, and have different electrical devices. New advanced home energy surveys look not only at the building fabric of your home but also your heating system, appliances and most importantly your lifestyle. This enables an accurate picture of your energy use to be assessed, and you will no whether to tackle your walls or appliances first. Analysis includes suggested improvements varying from the no brainers (with short pay back periods) through to the more expensive for the committed eco evangelist.

Building is expensive, so do the best you can, adding additional insulation during a build is easy, and cost effective, but is very difficult and expensive at a later stage. This can make significant long term savings on fuel bills. Building a healthy home using materials with low VOC and low toxicity can help you and your family's health. Maximising the use of space and using clever control systems can reduce wasting energy by only heating space you are using. Water is become a scarce resource and so should be used wisely. Hot water takes a lot of energy to heat, so maximise its effectiveness.

### Our eco home improvements tips:

- Make the Space fun and enjoyable
- Maximise use of space – ensure the existing space is used well, and integrated into extension.
- Consider your future needs
- Add as much insulation as possible
- Maximise solar gain, but shade in summer
- Maximise natural light
- Maximise natural ventilation through cross ventilation or stack effect
- Build as airtight as possible then ventilate right (use an MVHR if possible)
- Install an efficient heating system
- Minimise heat loss through cold bridging by good detailing
- Carefully consider materials for environmental impact and toxicity
- Consider renewable energy technologies (now or allow for future instillation)
- Use efficient water fittings

### Affordable

Well this all sounds very good but how do I afford this? The good news is that there are still grants available, even with the cuts proposed. These include loft and cavity insulation, and money for generating electricity through feed in tariffs. A green investment bank has also been promised to provide loans for energy saving improvements, which are then paid back with the savings made..