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THE HIGH LIFE

Lofts can be a great, untapped resource for adding space, value and views to your property, so what are you waiting for?

Report: **Felicity Borthwick**

If you're looking to add another bedroom onto your home then converting the loft is well worth considering. Not only will it create additional space, but according to the Do I Need Planning Permission website (www.doineedplanningpermission.co.uk) it can significantly increase the value of your property – often in the region of 15% for a typical semi-detached house. Moreover, the views from a loft can be fantastic and having it converted is usually cheaper and quicker than having an extension built. Plus you won't lose any garden space.

So where should you start? There are many factors to consider before embarking on a loft conversion, but the first thing you need to do is check whether it's even feasible. "If the ridge-beam height of your roof isn't sufficiently generous to allow easy standing then converting the loft will be a challenge," explains Luke McLaren of McLaren Excell Architects. "This is mainly due to planning permission insisting that the external roof line cannot be raised.

"You can get around this by lowering the loft floor but this can be expensive as it involves new ceilings for the rooms below. Generally the minimum ceiling height required is around two metres but 2.1 is more comfortable," he continues. "It's important to remember, though, that you will probably need to build a new loft floor (as the existing joists are not likely to be structurally adequate) and that this will reduce the loft's ceiling height slightly."



Melanie Rademacher of Mena Interiors converted an old school building into a luxurious home. "As the shape of the room was predetermined, we decided to emphasise the architectural features, such as the beams, while keeping the colours neutral," Melanie explains. "A dramatic statement is made by the Cloud sculpture (made from lots of small kites) that fills the top of the apex."

Mood board

Mena Interiors creates a classic yet contemporary bedroom with an Asian influence

Compiled by **Sophie Baylis**



Melanie Rademacher is the driving force behind Mena Interiors, specialising in high-end residential projects, both new-build and refurbishment.

020 7349 7115 or www.menainteriors.co.uk



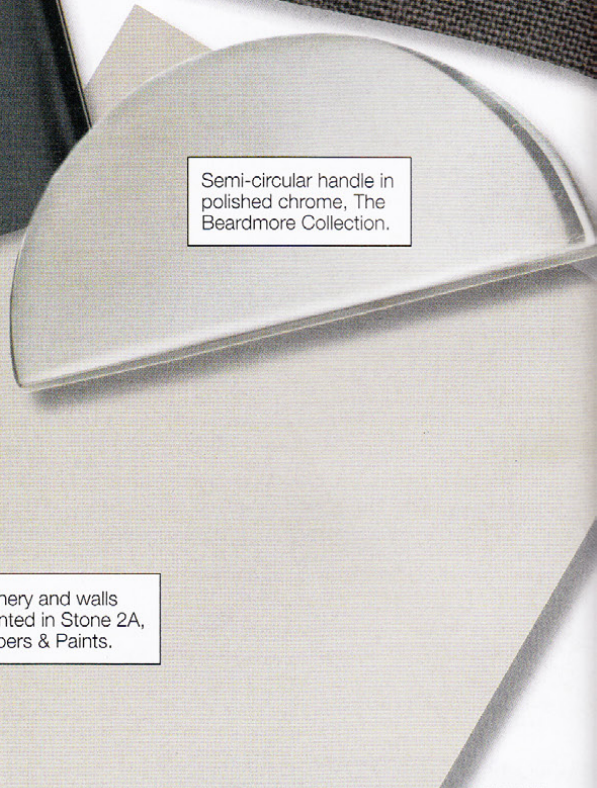
Shear Roman blind in Lardo 1-6518-490, JAB Anstoetz.



Chinese furniture with a lacquered black finish, Mena Interiors.



Curtains in 7157/64 Milani Platinum, Romo.



Semi-circular handle in polished chrome, The Beardmore Collection.



Light grey stained oak parquet flooring, Walking on Wood.

Joinery and walls painted in Stone 2A, Papers & Paints.



Melanie says...

We used a muted taupe colour palette and incorporated dark highlights to give the room the serenity required. Splashes of colour such as the dark red bed throw create focal points. To add warmth to the room we created a feeling of depth by layering contrasting textures such as the wooden floors and smooth cupboard handles. By sticking to this scheme we achieved a bedroom that is calm and clear, yet warm and interesting.

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