

5E Making the most of Permitted Development Rights with Vacuum Insulation

A demonstration of how VIP panels can have application for refurbishment of the existing housing stock

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3D Guides is a website with a library of user-navigable, computer generated 3D models simulating a wide range of popular UK house types.

Their purpose is to provide householders with a comprehensive understanding of their rights to extend and alter their homes without having to make a planning application to the local council. These rights are called *Permitted Development* and known generally as "PD" for short.

The term originates from planning permission “generally” granted for “development” by Statutory Instrument issued by a Secretary of State, and endorsed by Parliament.

Our website provides a simple search facility allowing visitors to quickly find their own house simulation out of the library of around 2,500 models. 3D Guides work by demonstration: “if you’ve got one of these then this is what you can do with it.” Once purchased, a 3D Guide can be downloaded in a couple of seconds and played on the customer’s computer moments later. They cost a modest £19.95 each.



Of particular interest is the potential for 3D Guides to democratise this valuable information. Few householders even know that PD Rights exist, let alone have any idea of what they are and how to use them in practice. 3D Guides solve that problem.

Many homeowners are turning to extending and altering their homes. It is often that households cannot afford to move to a larger house to gain more space, and so have to extend. Whilst our first series of 3D Guides focuses on the PD rights, our forthcoming second series demonstrates how to extend a house into an “eco-home”, where “eco” is principally short for “economic”. Affordable space is needed.

The key word here is EXTEND. Our suggested approach is to EXTEND AROUND the existing building envelope with thermally efficient construction. In so doing the home is significantly enlarged, and the existing masonry structure is turned into internal thermal mass at the same time. Typically, a 3-bed semi of 84 m² can be turned into a 4-bed, 2-bathroom home of around 140 m². With a building envelope that is up to 20 or 30 times more thermally efficient than the original.

The presentation will illustrate how this can be achieved. It will further demonstrate how the use of VIP's would yield even better results. There is great potential for VIP's to be applied across the existing housing stock.

We estimate that our 3D Guides alone represent around 10 to 12 million UK homes suitable for this kind of refurbishment, out of a total stock of about 26 million. Full "whole house", "extend around" solutions would use around 100 m² of VIPs per house, at current £80/m² rates. However prices would need to fall from that level to be more attractive, even when combined with space saving in minimal wall thicknesses.

