

Kitchens are a tremendously important part of our homes. Increasingly they have become the hub and heart of family life and as a result, more and more of us are creating kitchen/breakfast/family rooms to satisfy all functions.

Many of us want larger kitchens, however extending can seem like an expensive, daunting proposition. Yet one solution to achieve a more spacious, light feel to your kitchen is to use the space available at the side of your house - known as a side extension or side return. These can be the most rewarding of extensions – altering an unused alcove of the garden into a light-filled addition to your house. As with any extension it is important to get the right design in place before you start. An architect has the experience and vision to see how such a space can be linked into the existing rooms of your house to create a space that will have ‘wow’ factor as well as meet all of your functional requirements.

Roger Barnes of Architect Your Home Somerset advises “side returns can generally be built within your properties permitted development allowance, so can avoid the necessity of applying for planning permission. Of course this depends on the individual property and whether it is in a conservation area or if it has previously been extended, taking up the allowance.”

“It is also worth remembering that a side return will also need to comply with building regulations. Part L building regulation means you may need to limit the amount of glass you use in your property. These regulations limit the proportion of glass in a structure to approx 25%. However you can have more glass if you increase insulation in other

areas or choose a high spec product, such as a low E-glass or triple glazing. If your property has a south-facing garden it is worth thinking about how much glass you use, as too much glazing may cause the room to overheat.”

"Your architect will be able to guide you through these regulations and produce a re-planned kitchen and dining area which is linked with the garden, bathed in natural light and seamlessly fits with the rest of the house. With the benefit of this new space, you will use your home in a completely different way, so in a very real way a side return extension can actually change your life!"

Architect Your Home can offer you local advice, inspiration and drawings for your building project, regardless of your project size or budget. For more advice or information on how to get your project started contact Architect Your Home on 0800 849 8505 or visit www.architect-yourhome.com

