

*a guide to the
building regulations*



Home improvements

Homeowner's guide to

Submitting a building regulations application

This guide briefly explains the process and options available when submitting your application. For any further advice please contact your local building control office.

The options

There are two options when submitting an application for building works; a full plans application or a building notice application. Both of these types of application need to be submitted before you start work and the total fee for each is the same and is payable to the local authority.

Exemptions

Some works such as new garages or conservatories may be exempt from the building regulations. (See our guide 'Common Exemptions from Building Regulations'). If you are unsure about your own situation your local authority will be happy to advise you further.

Do I need planning permission?

Building Regulations approval and planning permission are not the same, however they are sometimes confused, building regulations will often apply when planning permission does not. For further advice about whether or not you need planning permission you should refer to the planning officer of your own local authority.

Full plans applications

The most common type of application we receive for building works is a full plans application. In this case, you as the building owner or your agent/architect submit an application with plans showing full details of the work together with any relevant structural calculations. Using this route once we have checked your plans and are satisfied they meet the building regulations you will receive a formal decision known as an “approval notice”. (This approval notice may be important when seeking loans or moving home).

You also have the added assurance that provided the works are carried out in accordance with the approval that a completion certificate will be issued to you once all the work is finished.

Building notice applications

A building notice is generally used for minor works such as removal of an internal load-bearing wall, where the person carrying out the work is familiar with current building regulations. One advantage is that it allows work to start 48 hours after submission of the application as there is no plan checking involved before work begins and therefore no approval notice is issued.

It can't be used when the works will involve building over or within three metres of a public sewer.

If you are submitting a building notice you must feel confident that the work will comply with the current building regulations as when we inspect the work if it doesn't you risk having to rectify this at your own expense.

Starting work

All building work must be inspected by one of our building control surveyors at key stages. This is not only to ensure that the work meets the current building regulations, but it also provides an opportunity for us to offer timely advice or for contractors to raise any queries they may have.

Once we receive your completed application you will often be assigned a dedicated surveyor for your project who will provide continuity of service for both you and your builder.

Completion of work

It is very important that you contact your building control surveyor to arrange for a final inspection when all the work is complete.

Once we are satisfied that the work is complete a completion certificate can be issued to you for safekeeping. This is an important document should you decide to sell or remortgage your property in the future. (We would also recommend that you obtain your completion certificate before making final payment to your builder.)

How to submit a full plans application

Application forms are available from your local authority's website to either print off or complete online.

If you are completing a hard copy application form please do so in duplicate and attach two copies of the following:

- Detailed plans, sections and elevations, including all technical notes, calculations and specifications.
- A 1:1250 scale plan showing size and position of the building, or the building as extended in relation to adjoining boundaries and adjacent street (a 'block plan').
- The plan fee. (Please refer to your local authority's current fees on their web site).

If appropriate you should also submit a written estimate based on a commercial builder's costs (excluding VAT).

How to submit a building notice application

An application form can be printed off or completed online via your local authority's website. You should also include the following:

- If appropriate a written estimate based on a commercial builder's costs (excluding VAT).
- The building notice fee. (Please refer to your local authority's current fees on their web site).

If the application is for a new building or an extension we will need a 1:1250 scale plan showing size and position of the building, or the building as extended in relation to adjoining boundaries and adjacent street (a 'block plan').