

Planning Application Guidance

The following provides information and guidance about when you will need to apply for planning permission or consent to undertake proposed development.

By far the majority of applications we deal with are for planning permission. Planning permission is required for new development and changes of use to existing development. 'Development' in a planning context means new buildings and alterations to existing buildings and structures, but also includes engineering operations such as excavations. It also includes some forms of demolition. Planning permission gives you approval to undertake proposed development as described in your application. It does not, however, override the need to obtain any other consents that may be necessary for your development to go ahead, nor does it imply that such consents will necessarily be forthcoming.

Internal alterations that do not materially affect the external appearance of your house and do not involve a change of use will not normally require planning permission.

However, the laws that govern when you need to apply for planning permission can be very complex and as such you are always advised to contact us prior to undertaking development to check whether planning permission is needed. If you are at all unsure about whether you need to apply for planning permission please contact us.

Permitted Development

Certain works of a minor nature can be carried out without needing to apply for planning permission. These works benefit from a 'blanket' national planning permission granted through the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. The range of works that are permitted is subject to amendment over time and we would recommend seeking our advice if you believe that something you wish to do is 'permitted development', since the rules are highly complex.

Conditions Affecting Permitted Development Rights

Permitted development rights can be taken away by conditions imposed upon previous planning permissions. For example, in situations where it is important to keep car parking space available it is common for limitations to be imposed restricting the conversion of integral garages to additional living accommodation. These restrictions may apply to any property where planning permission has been granted at some point in the past. However, they tend to be more common on properties and housing estates built since the 1980s.

Article 4 Directions

More widespread limitations on permitted development rights can be imposed through Article 4 Directions. These directions commonly restrict particular types of permitted development within a specified area. There are several Article 4 directions in the District, generally within conservation areas. To find out if the works you intend to do are affected by an Article 4 Direction please contact Planning Services on 01246 242424.

Householders

It is not always possible to tell you over the phone if planning permission is not required particularly as to give an accurate answer the history of the site must be researched. You are therefore advised to fill in one of our householder enquiry forms (282kb) from which we can tell you free of charge whether you need to apply for planning permission for the works you are proposing. If you are proposing to do work to your home we can write to you and tell you if you need planning permission. The form gives us all the information we need to be able to write to you and confirm whether or not permission is required.

Full details of the planning permission requirements for most common types of building work are available on the Planning Portal website. Most planning applications require a location plan and a site plan (also known as a block plan), to be submitted as supporting documents. You can Buy a Plan to support your application on the Planning Portal website. Please be aware that the planning portal web pages can only give general advice and to ensure that you get a more accurate answer you should still contact the Council.

You can also view the Planning Portal's interactive house guide to find out what you may or may not need planning permission for.

Even if you know you do not need planning permission approval we would encourage you to complete the form. Many home owners find it useful to have the Council's written confirmation about the planning status of works they have had carried out, particularly when buying or selling a property.

Non Householder applications

General guidance and planning advice can be found on the [planning portal](#) and the [Planning Practice Guidance](#). The government also has a document entitled a [Plain English Guide to the Planning System](#).

The Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers will help you to find out if you need planning permission for advertisements.

Important - if it appears that planning permission is not required you are advised to forward a rough, dimensioned, sketch of your proposal to us so that a double check can be made. Permitted development rights may have been removed on a previous planning application, meaning planning permission may still be required.

Be sure!

Before you undertake proposed development be sure that you do not need to apply for planning permission or obtain consent from us first. If you undertake development that needs planning permission without first obtaining it, it may result in problems for you later.

Before submitting an application you are always advised to contact us to discuss the likelihood of acceptability of your proposal as negotiations beforehand could save time and money later.