

The Planning Service

The purpose of planning is to control the development and use of land in the best interests of the community. In Northern Ireland planning is managed by the Planning Service, an agency within the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland. When you send us a planning application we can consider your proposed development against the background of the general interests of the local area. A proposed development which may seem to be minor to you can have a significant effect on the local area.

In many cases, however, you can carry out small alterations to your home and property without planning permission. This is known as 'Permitted Development'. There will be times when work that needs building regulations does not need planning permission, and vice versa. If you are not sure, you should get advice from the Planning Service or the Building Control Service.

You will need planning permission if the building you plan to work on is listed or in a conservation area. Your local planning office will be able to advise you. You may need special permission if you live near an archaeological site or historic monument.

Planning Service

For more information, advice, contact numbers and addresses, please phone the Planning Service on 028 9025 2800 or visit their website on www.doeni.gov.uk/planning/index.htm

Building Control

For further information and advice contact the Building Control department at your local Council offices. Please ask if you would like this information in large print, Braille, another language, or on audio tape.



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**South Eastern Group
Building Control**

Building Control What we do

including an introduction
to the Planning Service



The Building Control Service

District Councils, through their Building Control Departments, have a statutory duty to apply building regulations. These regulations make sure of the safety and health of people in and around buildings. They also protect the environment by stating that buildings must be thermally efficient, energy-efficient, and reduce pollution which damages the atmosphere.

There are also regulations which deal with accessibility and improve the quality of life for people with disabilities. Building regulations and Building Control have an important role to play in helping protect people and the environment.

Our service

In Building Control we carefully assess proposed work to make sure it meets the regulations. As work progresses on site we inspect it at crucial and important stages. There are a number of 'routes' you can take when making an application to Building Control.

• Full Plans route

- 1 You send your application to your local Building Control Department. Your application must include:
 - * *duplicate copies of plans, location map and site plan;*
 - * *a completed application form;*
 - * *the estimated cost of the work (if needed); and*
 - * *the appropriate fee.*
- 2 We assess the plans to make sure that they meet the requirements of the Building Regulations.
- 3 We carry out site inspections from start to finish, to make sure that the works comply with the Building Regulations.

• Building Notice route

In this case we do not need to see plans, only a location map, and you must send the correct fee. At present this applies only to domestic applications, for example building a house, a roofspace conversion, or installing a service, for example central heating. You can find more details and information on the Building Notice Procedure leaflet (SG4).

• Regularisations

We can give a Certificate of Regularisation for unauthorised work you have already carried out, as long as that work meets with the requirements of the Building Regulations. There are more details and information available on the Regularisation Procedure leaflet (SG3).

Helpful and accountable

Today, Building Control staff want to help the customer and offer help and guidance to the Construction Industry, relevant professions and the public on how to meet the requirements of the Building Regulations. Building Control in Northern Ireland is independent of any commercial interests. It is answerable to the councils and the public. Anyone using the service pays a fee, which means that Building Control practically finances itself.

Completion Certificates

If plans meet the requirements of the regulations, we issue an Approval Certificate and, where work is satisfactorily completed, we issue a Completion Certificate. These are important documents in the conveyancing procedure when property is bought and sold.

Other services

Building Control staff provide other services, such as the control of dangerous buildings and structures, licensing, property searches, technical advice, and petroleum licensing.

You can get more information and advice by contacting Building Control at your local council offices.

