



MAKING AN APPLICATION

If you want to carry out work to which Building Regulations apply you must make an application to your local Building Control Office. Examples of such work are:

- Erecting a new building
- Extending an existing building
- Changing the use of a building (e.g. house to offices)
- Converting a roofspace or garage
- Carrying out structural alterations, for example:
 - Replacing existing walls, floors, roofs, stairs
 - Making two rooms into one
 - Removal of a chimney breast
 - Installing cavity wall insulation
 - Drylining walls or lining walls/ceilings with sheeting or boarding.
- Provision of services of fittings, for example:
 - Installation of a fire detection and alarm system
 - Installation of central heating or providing a wood burning/multi-fuel stove
 - Replacement/relining flues
 - Installation of new sanitary appliances
 - Installing solar panels on your building.

What You Must Do

Where an application is required for domestic works, there is a choice of two routes:

- a Full Plans Application; or
- a Building Notice Application

Where the work has been completed illegally, i.e. without a Building Control Application, and you now wish to have it approved, a third form of application is required called a **Regularisation**.

Full Plans Application

A full plans submission requires you to complete an application form which is available from this website or your local Building Control office or from the Building Control Northern Ireland website <http://www.buildingcontrol-ni.com/> and to provide the following documents:

- Two copies of proposed plans, sections, constructional details, specifications and Structural Engineer's designs (where this is critical to starting the work), and in the case of an extension or alteration two copies of existing plans.
- Two copies of a site location plan to scale.
- Two copies of a block plan
- If you are building a new house, two copies of the SAP Calculations
- The correct fee.



For non-domestic work, a further set of plans showing compliance with fire safety regulations may be required, so that we can consult with the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service on your behalf and for new build work, instead of an SAP calculation an SBEM calculation.

You may submit the application yourself or engage someone to do it for you. You are advised to select a suitably qualified and competent architect/agent who has a good working knowledge of Building Regulations; this may speed up the process of your application. If an agent is employed, all correspondence will be addressed to them. In all cases a full name and postal address must be provided to allow the Building Control Service to contact either yourself or your agent. The full postal address of the property to be developed should also be included and the application form signed and dated.

Rejection of Plans

If, however, your plans do not meet the standards of the Building Regulations, they may be rejected. Your architect/agent will then have to provide us with amended plans or where there is a specific area where your agent doesn't agree with our assessment you can appeal. For more information follow the link below:

<https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/articles/building-regulations-appeals>

Building Notice Application

A Building Notice may only be for small domestic schemes. With a Building Notice, plans are not required unless Building Control ask for plans for information purposes. You simply complete an application form, describing the work you intend to carry out, and pay the appropriate fee.

Building Notices are particularly suited to smaller, less complex schemes. The builder should be familiar with the standards in the Building Regulations as there are no approved plans to work from. If the builder creates a contravention they will be asked to remedy it. Building Control will concentrate on site inspections, as there are no drawings for the project.

The disadvantage of a Building Notice is that many lending institutions insist on having approved plans prior to issuing any funds. There are no approved plans to enable accurate tendering, and critically you will not have the expert advice of a professional architect or designer to guide you through the process.

A Building Notice may not be given for:

- (a) The erection of a dwelling,
- (b) A material change of use from an existing dwelling; or
- (c) Building work to an existing dwelling that –
 - (i) Creates a new storey –
 - (aa) with a floor area more than 3m²; and
 - (bb) to which the requirement of regulation 55 in Part H applies; or
 - (ii) Increases the floor area of the dwelling by more than 10m².

A Building Notice will only be considered valid if the building work to which it relates commences within 3 years of the date on which the notice was given.



Unauthorised Works

If work is carried out without an application having been made, you may be prosecuted. Furthermore, should you wish to sell your property the purchaser's solicitor will wish to see evidence of the approval and completion certificates. If these are not available, it may delay or prevent the sale. Keep all certificates in a safe location preferably with the Deeds.

Regularisation Application

Where works are carried out without an application having been made you may be prosecuted. However, to facilitate people who wish to have work approved, in 1999 Building Regulations introduced a new process call Regularisation. If you wish to sell your property, the purchaser's solicitor may wish to see the Regularisation Certificate. If this is not available, it may delay or prevent the sale.

Applying for a Regularisation has been kept as simple as possible. Simply complete the Regularisation form, stating the address of the property, a description of the work and the date the work was carried out. When you submit the application form and pay the appropriate fee, you should arrange an appointment for the Area Surveyor to inspect the work.

When the Building Control Surveyor comes out to inspect this work, they may require you to alter, fix or complete work in order to comply with the Building Regulations. Once this has been done, you will need to get another inspection carried out.

Exemptions

Some building works are exempt and do not require an application; examples of these are:

- Small porches no bigger than 5m²
- Conservatories, open carports, or covered areas being extensions not exceeding 30m² in area; sunrooms are treated as extensions and not conservatories.
- Certain detached garages and single storey buildings not exceeding 30m² in area.
- Certain sheds not exceeding 15m² in area; or certain agricultural buildings: fences, garden walls, gates, certain greenhouses.
- Replacement windows, with similar style
- Replacement sanitary fittings.

If you require verification that your scheme is exempt, you may apply for a Confirmation of Exemption letter at a cost of **£35.00**.

Pre-Consultation Application

If you are considering making a non-domestic application and need some advice on a specific project, we provide a free pre-application consultation. A pre-submission requires you to complete an application form which is available on this website or from your local building control office.