

A householders guide to making a planning application

For a copy of this leaflet in large print, another language or other alternative format, please contact us.

Telephone **Planning Direct**: (0121) 303 1115 Textphone (Minicom): (0121) 464 0938

www.birmingham.gov.uk/planningapplications

This leaflet is written mainly for householders and explains how to make a planning application. It answers some of the questions that many people ask and tells you how to get more help and information.

What is planning permission for?

In Birmingham, the City Council is the planning authority that controls the development and use of the land. To do this, the Council considers planning applications and decides whether to give planning permission or not. Our aim is to protect and improve the quality of the environment by making sure all new development is acceptable. For example, we check that development is well designed, is in an appropriate place and will not cause harm to neighbours.

Do I need planning permission?

This depends on what you want to do. Some minor alterations and extensions, particularly to houses, can often be carried out without the need for planning permission. This is known as **permitted development** but in some cases these rights may have been removed.

However, in most cases, works will normally need permission. **It is your responsibility to find out whether you need permission.** Please see our website for advice but if you are in any doubt, please ask us. We are always pleased to discuss your proposal with you and we do not charge for this. Contact details are given at the end of this leaflet.



Will planning permission be all I need?

Not always. In many cases work on your house will also require building regulations approval. This is not the same as planning permission. Your application for planning permission will be dealt with entirely separately from any application you submit for building regulations approval.

Building regulation approval is the means by which we check that a building is structurally sound and built to required health and safety standards, to protect the people who use the building. When work is completed on site and has been inspected and approved by a building surveyor, we issue a completion certificate. This document is important because solicitors may ask to see it if you sell your home. Contact our Building Consultancy team for more information on the building regulations.

As well as applying for planning permission and building regulations approval, if your house is a listed building or is in a conservation area, you may need to make a separate application for extensions or alterations and for demolition. If you are unsure about what permission you need please check on our website or contact us for advice.

Getting professional advice

If you are considering a building project at your property, you may wish to find someone with the right professional experience to help you draw up plans and apply for the permissions you may need. A qualified surveyor or architect should be able to provide this kind of service, for example. If your application is straightforward you may be able to do the drawings yourself. However, they must be clear, accurate and drawn to a metric scale.

Applying for planning permission - where do I start?

You will need to **complete a householder's planning application form**. This and other types of forms are available on our website, or the Planning Portal's website:

www.planningportal.gov.uk or we can post one to you. When you ask for an application form, please say briefly what you want to do so we know which form to give you. We provide detailed guidance notes with the form to help you complete it. However, if you have difficulty completing the form or do not understand the notes, please let us know so that we can help.



What else do I need to provide?

This depends on what your proposal is for - please check the guidance notes with the application form for details. As a general guide:

- All applications must include a **location plan**, at a scale of 1:1250 showing your property and its surroundings. You can find out how to obtain one of these on our website, where you will also find out how many copies you should provide. Alternatively, please call the telephone number at the end of this leaflet.
- You will also need to supply **plan drawings** showing us exactly what you want to do. Check our website, or the guidance notes with the application form, to find out the type of drawings needed and how many copies you should provide.
- You will usually be charged a **fee** when you make your application. Fees are set nationally by the Government and the amount you have to pay will depend on what you want to do. Check our website or the guidance notes with the application form to find out about current fees.

Checklist

Please note that if you do not complete the form accurately, or do not send the correct fee, we will be unable to process your application. The following checklist may help you:

- Have you completed the correct planning application form for the type of work you want to do?
- Have you followed carefully all the guidance notes provided with the application form?
- Are your plans drawn to the correct scale, showing exactly what you want to do?
- Have you got a location plan showing the site of your property and provided the right number of copies?
- Have you got a site plan showing the relationship of your proposal with your neighbours.
- Have you checked how many copies of your application form and plans you need to provide?
- Have you included the correct fee with your application?



The Party Wall Act

If you want to carry out building work which involves:

- Work on an existing wall shared with another property.
- Building on your boundary.
- Excavating near a neighbouring building.

You must find out whether the Party Wall Act 1996 applies to you. If it does, you must notify all neighbours who would be affected. A free explanatory booklet about this is available from the Department for Communities and Local Government (you can view it on the DCLG website). Contact details are at the end of this leaflet.

What happens to my application?

Acknowledgement

When we receive your application we will send you an acknowledgement letter (usually within 3 working days). This letter is important so please keep it. It tells you the reference number that we have given to your application, the date by which we aim to make a decision and a contact telephone number. It is also a receipt for your fee.

Checking your application is complete

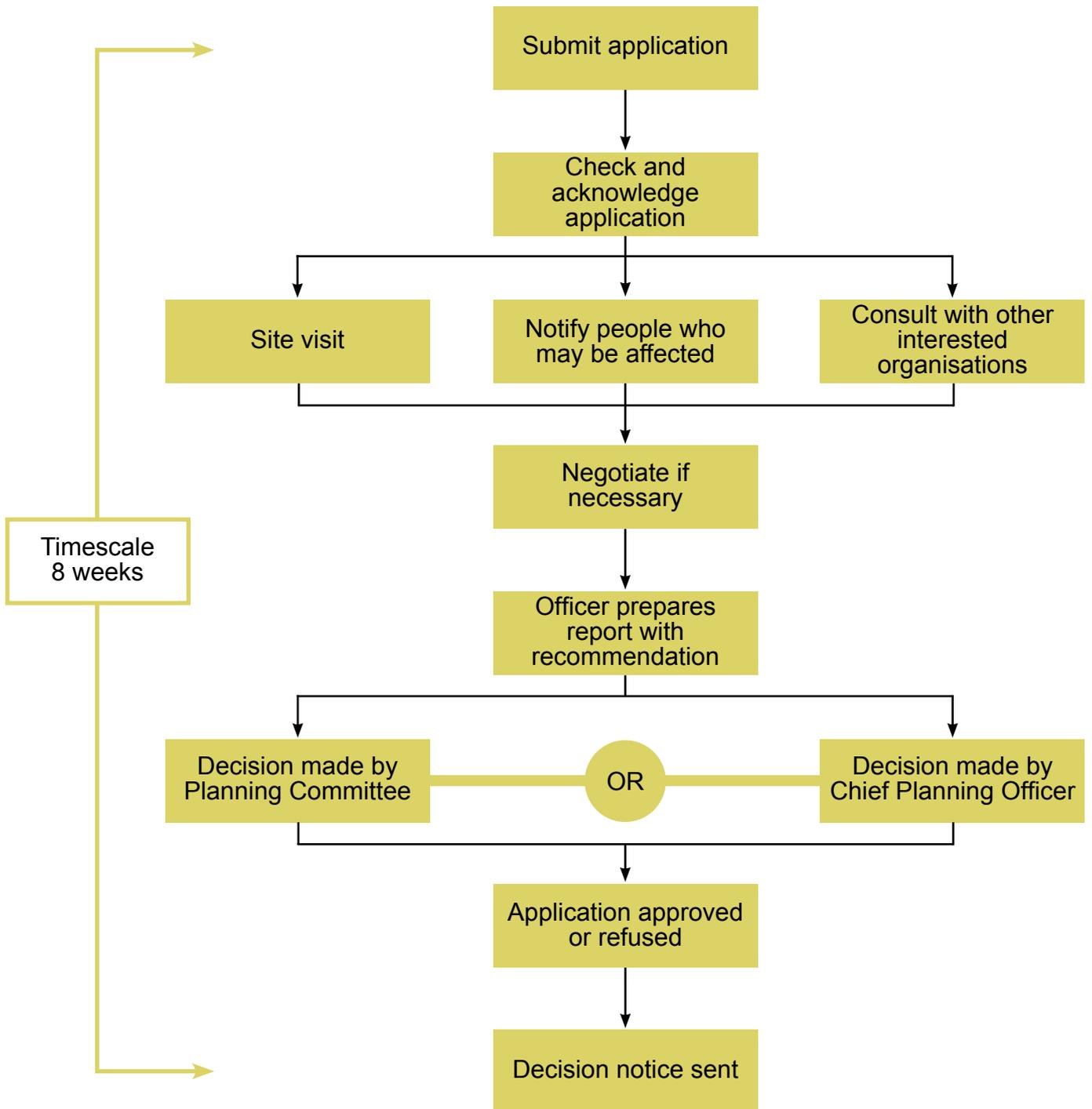
If we do not have all the information we need we will contact you to ask for the missing information (which may delay your application). Please note that if you are using a professional agent we will always contact them about your application.

Site visit

The planning officer dealing with your application will visit your property to check that the drawings you have sent us are correct and to make sure what you want to do is acceptable. If we need to see you at your house, we will make an appointment.



How the process works



If application is refused, applicant can appeal to the Planning Inspectorate



Who will know about my application?

We will tell any neighbours who we think may be affected by what you want to do. We will give them 21 days to make comments. It is always a good idea to tell your neighbours of your plans before you make an application. For some applications we may ask other Council services and other organisations for their views.

How long will it take?

We will deal with your application as quickly as possible. We try to deal with 85% of all applications from householders within 8 weeks. Larger and more complicated applications can take longer.

To find out how your application is progressing you can visit our website or telephone **Planning Direct**: (0121) 303 1115 during office hours. Please tell us the reference number of your application when you call. We will tell you as soon as possible if there are any problems with your application and whether you need to change your plans to overcome a problem or objection. We may need to contact your neighbours again if your proposal changes.

How is a decision about my planning application made?

We assess your application, taking into account policy guidelines, site features and any comments people have made about your application. We decide whether to recommend that the application be approved or refused. In most cases, if your application is straightforward, the final decision will be made by the Chief Planning Officer.

If your proposal is complicated or if there are serious problems, which we have been unable to sort out, the decision will be made by the Planning Committee.

The Planning Committee is made up of 15 local Councillors who meet most Thursday mornings in the Council House to discuss planning applications. Meetings are open to the public and you are welcome to attend. Details are on the website.

Speaking at the committee meeting

You or your agent are allowed to speak at the meeting provided you tell us in advance that you wish to do so and that you limit what you say to 3 minutes. Anyone who has objected to your proposals may also speak at the committee meeting. Details are on the website, where you can also register to speak.



How do I find out what the decision is?

We will send you a written notice giving the decision on your application within 3 days of it being made. If your application is approved, there may be certain conditions with which you have to comply. These could include submitting to us for approval details of the materials that you want to use. You must comply with any conditions before you begin the work.

You must carry out the work exactly as shown on the approved plans, which we will return to you for safekeeping (this is important because solicitors may ask to see them if you sell your home).

Normally, work must start within 3 years or the approval will lapse. If you want to make any changes to the plans that have been approved, you must contact us with the details before starting work. We will then write to you to say whether the changes are acceptable, or whether you will need to make a new planning application.

What if my application is refused?

If your application is refused, we will tell you why. You may want to make an appointment with us to discuss whether a different proposal might be acceptable. If you are still unhappy you can appeal against the decision to the Planning Inspectorate. Any appeal must be made within 6 months of the date of the decision. Advice on how to appeal is sent to you with the decision notice. (See **Contact us** for useful web addresses providing information about appeals).

Other information

More detailed information and advice is available on our website or by contacting us. You can view reference copies of planning policies and local development plans at our reception in Lancaster Circus and you will also find most on the website. (See **Contact us** on the back page for other useful web addresses).



Contact us

Planning applications

Planning Management
PO Box 28
Birmingham
B1 1TU

Telephone: **Planning Direct** (0121) 303 1115
E-mail: planning.enquiries@birmingham.gov.uk
Fax: (0121) 303 4838
Minicom: (0121) 303 3992

Building Regulations approval

Building Consultancy
Birmingham City Council
1 Lancaster Circus
Birmingham
B4 7DY

Telephone: (0121) 675 7006
E-mail: building.consultancy@birmingham.gov.uk
Minicom: (0121) 464 0938

Opening hours

(1 Lancaster Circus, Queensway, Birmingham,
B4 7DJ)

Monday - Thursday	8.45 - 5.15pm
Friday	8.45 - 4.15pm

For information about the Party Wall Act

Department for Communities and
Local Government
Telephone: 020 7944 3000
Web address: www.communities.gov.uk

For other general planning information visit:

www.planningportal.gov.uk
or
www.planning-inspectorate.gov.uk

