

# Do I need permission?

## A guide for householders

Not all extensions and alterations to dwelling houses require planning permission. Certain types of works or development are allowed without the need to make a planning application at all! Such work to a house is called '**Permitted Development**'.

This leaflet offers simple advice to the householder rather than a full explanation of planning law. However, if in doubt it is always advisable to contact Planning Services (01228 817112 / 817178 / 817109) before commencing any work.

Whether planning permission is required or not, good design is always important. Any extensions or alterations you wish to make should be in scale and harmony with your house and surrounding properties. It should aim to avoid causing any adverse impact on your neighbours such as overlooking or loss of privacy.

You should give particular thought to details such as windows, doors and the materials you intend to use. Householders are encouraged to employ an experienced professional to design and prepare plans of any extension or major alteration.

The Council's Planning Officers are always happy to discuss your proposals prior to the submission of your scheme. They can also liaise with colleagues to ascertain whether Building Regulations Approval would be necessary.

Changes to some types of property in certain areas will usually require planning permission, even for minor works. This includes:

- Extensions and alterations to **flats** (excluding internal alterations).

- If your house is a **Listed Building**, consent is required to undertake internal or external work (other than repair on an exact "like for like" basis). In these circumstances the Council's Conservation Officers are available to give guidance on what is or is not an acceptable repair.
- If your house is within a **Conservation Area** specific restrictions are likely to apply that limit how much it can be altered.
- It may also be included within an **Article 4 Direction**: that means that it is within an area that has been identified as worthy of preservation because of its traditional character and appearance. In such instances planning permission will be required for minor works that are normally exempt from planning control over domestic properties, such as removal and replacement of traditional windows, doors, guttering or chimney stacks and pots. Effectively the 'Permitted Development' rights enjoyed by most householders such as the replacement of traditional windows or the removal of chimneys, are removed by the Article 4 Direction. **You must check with Planning Services to see if your property is within such an area.**
- In addition, other properties that have been adapted for residential use, such as barn conversions may have had their 'Permitted Development' rights removed and thus are subject to planning control to alter or extend them.
- This is often done to ensure that the traditional form, character and scale of the original building is safeguarded from over-large or inappropriate extensions or changes to its features.
- It may also be appropriate to prevent later additions that would overwhelm small sites and lead to problems of privacy/ lack of amenity space or inadequate parking. Please check with Planning Services if you think this might apply to your property.