

Get planning permission for self-build projects first time

How to get planning permission for self-build projects first time

by sarahchilcott on October 16, 2017

You have found the site or the renovation project and are keen to get started. The last thing you need are delays with processing your planning application. Whether your plot comes complete with planning permission or you need to apply for approval, understanding the process, as well as the requirements and concerns of your local authority, will help you to achieve your aspirations and ensure your project complies with both the planning and building control requirements.

In this article, we introduce you to our Professional Portal; a central online hub for finding guidance, information and tools for managing any project. We also offer some handy tips on getting planning permission for your self-build first time, below.

Submit a valid application

Planning applications take an average of two months to process and your local planning authority will not begin to process your application until you submit all the necessary documentation and payment. Even professionals who submit applications still occasionally make errors so if you do choose to do it yourself, check and recheck your application form before submission. Make sure you include all necessary reports and forms to support the application – and that you pay the correct fee.

Provide a compliant map

When you apply for planning permission, your local authority will usually require a planning map, or maps, to support the application. One of the most common reasons for a rejected application is an invalid or incorrect planning map. Buying the correct map from a reputable source increases your chances of a successful planning application and will save you time and money.

You will need to supply a location plan which shows the area in its surrounding context and depending on the nature of your project, you might also need a site or block plan which shows the project in a wider scale and includes access routes, amenities, pylons, trees etc.

The following errors can invalidate a planning map:

Incorrectly marked location

Incorrect or missing scale label

Out of date information

A reproduction rather than original supplied

The map does not fit correctly on a A3 or A4 piece of paper

The map does not show the direction of north.

How can I ensure my site location plan is compliant?

Ensure markings for both the property boundary and other land owned are clear and current; (showing the land as it is today) with a red line around all the land that is required for the development and blue line drawn around any other land owned by you

Use an identified standard scale – 1:1250 for urban applications and 1:2500 for rural or larger applications

Clearly mark the direction of north

Make sure that the plan can be scaled to fit A3 or A4 paper

To demonstrate that the map does not breach copyright, clearly show the date of both plan creation and purchase

Show relevant roads and buildings.

How can I ensure my block/site plan is compliant?

Use an identified standard scale – 1.200 for urban applications and 1.500 for rural or larger applications

Clearly show the proposed development in the wider environment including the site boundaries and other buildings in the area

Clearly show all access routes, public rights of way, buildings, trees and footpaths on land adjoining the site that will affect the development

Show the type and extent of any hard surfacing/hardfacing.

Understand your local authority's requirements

Unlike building control, planning rules can differ considerably from council to council, so gaining an understanding of your local authority's local requirements is vital. Research the local council's policy as well as national regulations and consult your council's planning department or a Chartered Planning Consultant, architect or other professional, who can advise on the requirements and/or process.

If you're still in the research stage of the process, take a look at the development plan policies of your local area for insights into plots that are more and less likely to get approval. Your local authority may offer supplementary planning guidance, giving more detailed information about their expectations and the external factors you need to consider such as the structure and layout of the neighbourhood. Talking to your prospective neighbours about any concerns they have can also help.

It's important to note that policies can change over time, so what wasn't permitted in the past may be considered today and vice versa. Don't forget that you can track the progress of your application with the local authority and if you receive a request for further documentation or your application is rejected, use their expertise and ask for advice.

Get the support you need

Visit our Professional Portal for the resources you need to support your project; these key tools can all be found in one central area of our website.

The planning system can be confusing so getting the right support and advice is vital. The aforementioned planning consultants or architects can help with guidance and once your project has been approved, make sure you recruit the right professionals for the job. The Federation of Master Builders can provide details of accredited, audited organisations and the RTPI has a comprehensive directory of Chartered Planners in your area.

Once you have been granted planning permission, don't forget you also need building regulations approval to make sure you build to the correct standards. Find out more about building control on the Planning Portal website.

Visit our self-build hub for guidance on Community Infrastructure Levy, financing your project, brownfield registers and much more.

please note: this post was updated on 2/11/17]