

Guidance notes for applying for a Building Warrant

Introduction

You will need a Building Warrant to build, convert, alter, extend or demolish a building under the Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004. However, there are some types of work that are exempt from requiring a Building Warrant (Schedule 1 to regulation 3) and others that do not need a Building Warrant as long as they meet the Building Regulations (schedule 3 to regulation 5).

When to use this form

Use this form when applying to your Local Authority for a Building Warrant.

Note: You cannot start the work until you have a Building Warrant from the Local Authority. If you have completed building work without getting a Building Warrant, you will need to submit a 'Completion Certificate where no Building Warrant was obtained' form.

If you are a homeowner and are not sure if you need a Building Warrant, you should contact the relevant Local Authority for advice. The [Building Standards Customer Journey](#) explains your roles and responsibilities and gives details on where to get further help.

When submitting a Building Warrant, you will need to give the following information.

Plans and information you should provide with your application

Your application for a Building Warrant should include enough information to help the Local Authority check that the proposed building work meets the Building Regulations.

Note: The Local Authority can decide how much information they need. If you are providing a certificate of design, you should upload this as a supporting document.

You should submit a block plan with your application. The block plan should be to a scale of not less than 1:1250, although a scale of 1:500 is preferred. It should show:

- the size and position of the building, and any adjoining building if it affects the proposal
- a north point



Guidance notes for applying for a Building Warrant

- the position, width and ground level of any road, court or footway adjoining the building or from which there is access to the building
- the boundaries with land that is occupied by someone other than you, and
- any notional boundaries needed to meet the standards. (A notional boundary is used to determine the safe distance between buildings under the same ownership, or compartments within a building, where there may be a risk of fire spreading between them.)

Note: If the position of your building (or property or site) cannot be identified from the block plan, you may also need to submit a further location plan, drawn to a scale of not less than 1:2500.

The Local Authority may also need the following drawings, depending on the type of building work you propose.

- Plans of the foundations, each floor and any roof
- Sections through the building
- An elevation of each face of the building

The drawings should include the following.

- The level of the site of the building, lowest floor and adjacent ground (including any road), all in relation to one another and some known ground levels.
- The position, materials and dimensions of foundations, walls, windows (including opening area and direction of opening), doors (including direction of opening), floors, roofs, chimneys and flues, ventilators and ventilation ducts, stairs, landings and balconies, protective barriers, and any other parts of the building the local authority asks for details of.
- Details of construction, including any frame and size and position of reinforcing material.
- Details of how loading and strength have been calculated.
- An indication of any fire-resisting compartment and separating walls and floors, including details of any fire-protection measures.
- The position, materials and dimensions, including the gauge or weight, of any damp-proof course or other moisture barrier.



Guidance notes for applying for a Building Warrant

- The position of any sanitary ware, including toilet pans, sinks, showers and so on, or other built-in equipment.
- The position, materials, dimensions and form of any drainage or ventilation pipe (including the line, depth and inclination, and means of ventilation of every drain and the relationship to any sewer, sewage treatment work or other outlet that drains will run into).
- The position, materials, dimensions and form of any drainage traps, manholes and access openings.
- Relevant information necessary to show that the work involved will be done in line with building regulations 13, 14, 15 and 17.
- The position and dimensions of any lift well, lift car, machine room and platform lift.
- Fire escape routes, including dimensions.
- The position of any ground hydrants, fire mains and fire appliance access.
- Any extra information requested by the local authority that allows them to properly consider your application, such as ground condition or fire engineering reports.

For buildings with sleeping accommodation, the drawings should also include the following.

- The number of socket outlets, carbon-monoxide and smoke alarms in homes
- The position of automatic fire alarms and carbon-monoxide alarms in residential buildings
- The position of automatic life-safety fire-suppression systems in residential-care buildings

You can include any further information in a written specification sent with the plans. However, if an approved certifier of design is covering specific aspects of the design, further information may not be necessary. For complex buildings, strategy diagrams for structure and fire may be required, even if an approved certifier of design is used.

Each drawing submitted as part of your application must have a unique reference number. When uploading the plans to the eBuildingStandards portal, you must include a unique reference number on the 'Additional Supporting Documentation'



Guidance notes for applying for a Building Warrant

page when asked. If you are uploading revised versions of plans you have already submitted, you need to include the amended revision reference number.

The Local Authority may ask you to highlight or shade the new building work to allow them to easily see the extent of the work you are carrying out and the materials you are using.

Approved certifiers of design or construction

The Building (Scotland) Act 2003 allows the design or construction of building work to be certified by people who are qualified, competent and experienced in meeting the Building Regulations, without the need for Local Authorities to carry out inspections or examine designs in detail.

If you use an approved certifier, you will get a discount on your Building Warrant application fee. You can submit a certificate of design with the Building Warrant application or before the Building Warrant is issued.

Certification is optional in Scotland and is only relevant to work that needs a Building Warrant.

There are certification of design schemes for structure and energy and certification of construction schemes for electrical installations, plumbing, drainage and heating installations.

You can find more information on approved certifiers at:

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/building-standards/building-approval-process/>

Fees

Fees for Building Warrants, and Amendment to Building Warrant applications, are set by the Building (Fees) (Scotland) Regulations 2004. Fees relate to the 'value of the work' and are charged by Local Authorities.

When calculating the value of the work, you must use the normal market costs and not any discounted costs which you might achieve. For example, in the case of a self-build project where labour may be unpaid, you should include a fair assessment of the labour costs if a commercial contractor could have been used.



Guidance notes for applying for a Building Warrant

In the estimated value of the work, you do not need to include work that does not need Building Warrant approval, for example, decoration, floor coverings and so on. However, you should include temporary or preliminary work relating to the permanent work that is necessary to meet the Building Regulations.

If the Local Authority assess that the estimated value you have provided is incorrect, they will check the amount using an industry-recognised index of building costs, for example the RICS Building Cost Information Surveys of Tender Prices. This provides the average, lowest and highest prices in £ per m² for work. It also provides a modifier that can be applied to reflect geographical variations throughout Scotland.

If the Local Authority think the value of the work should be higher than you have stated, they can refuse to consider your application for a Building Warrant unless the value is increased and you pay the appropriate fee.

There is no fee for work to alter or extend a home to make it suitable for use by a disabled person. This relates specifically to work to provide facilities for disabled people. A disabled person is defined in the Building Standards as 'a person with a physical, hearing or sight impairment which affects their mobility or their use of buildings'.

You can get a discount on the application fee if you send one or more certificates from an approved certifier of design with your application, or you submit them before the Warrant is issued. Discounts are also available when you submit a certificate of design with a Completion Certificate where no Warrant was obtained.

You can find full details of fees and discounts in chapters 3.13 and 3.14 of the [Building Standards Procedural Handbook](#).

What happens if the Local Authority refuse my application?

If the Local Authority refuse to grant or amend the terms of a Building Warrant (known as a 'deemed refusal'), you can appeal to the sheriff court.



Guidance notes for applying for a Building Warrant

A Local Authority may refuse to grant a Building Warrant if you have not submitted enough information within nine months of the first report issued by the Local Authority. This first report highlights matters that need attention before the Warrant can be issued, if the Local Authority have not agreed to extend the nine-month time limit. If the Local Authority have not issued a first report within three months of receiving your application, you can assume they have refused to grant the Warrant.

Electronic communication

All correspondence will be by email. If you do not want to use email, please tell the Local Authority.

