

You may also need permission if making a connection to a public or group water scheme or sewer.

You can obtain details of the statutory requirements which must be met before development can commence from your local authority.

The law governing the planning system is set out in the Local Government (Planning and Development) Acts, 1963 to 1993 and the Local Government (Planning and Development) Regulations, 1994 to 1997. These may be purchased from the Government Publications Sales Office, Sun Alliance House, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2, Telephone (01) 661 3111.

**The leaflets in this series are:**

A Guide to Planning Permission	PL.1
Making a Planning Application	PL.2
Commenting on a Planning Application	PL.3
Building A House - the Planning Issues	PL.4
Doing Work around the House - The Planning Issues	PL.5
Agriculture and Farm Development - The Planning Issues	PL.6
Planning for the Business Person	PL.7
The Development Plan	PL.8
Environmental Impact Assessment	PL.9
Making a Planning Appeal	PL.10
A Guide to the Building Regulations	PL.11

Tá leagan Gaeilge den bhileog seo ar fáil.



*PL 4 - Building a House*  
—  
*The Planning Issues*

**Planning Authority Office**

PL.4  
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This leaflet sets out the main planning issues to be considered when building a house.

This leaflet is intended as a practical guide. It is not a definitive legal interpretation of planning law. For more information you may consult your local planning authority.

### 1. Do I need planning permission?

Yes. Planning permission is needed to build a house.

### 2. Are there different types of permission?

Yes. There are three types of planning permission. An application may be made for:

- *permission*;
- *outline permission*;
- *approval*.

The commonest type of application made is for *permission*, often referred to as *full permission*. There are circumstances when you may want to make an application for *outline permission*. For example, you may want to see whether the planning authority agrees with your proposal in principle before you go to the trouble of making detailed plans. However, if you obtain *outline permission*, you will have to submit exact details and drawings of your proposals and get *approval* before starting work.

### 3. Where do I get planning permission?

From the planning authority for your area i.e. your local County Council, County Borough or Borough Corporation or Urban District Council.

### 4. How do I make a planning application?

Forms and information are available from the planning authority. For more information see Making a Planning Application (PL.2).

### 5. How much will this cost?

A fee is payable with applications for planning permission. The current fee for an application to build a house is £42. In addition to the fee, a development contribution may be required by the planning authority towards the cost of infrastructure (e.g. roads, water supply, sewerage) necessary to

service your house. This would be included as a condition in the planning permission.

### 6. Do I need to consult the planning authority in advance?

You do not have to consult the planning authority before making a planning application, but it is advisable to do so where you are unsure of any aspect of applying for permission, your obligations, local planning policies for the area, future road plans affecting the site, etc. You may need to discuss connecting to the public water supply, sanitary services etc.

### 7. Where can I find out about local planning policies?

The development objectives and policies of the planning authority are set out in the local development plan. Policies and objectives for promoting and controlling the building of houses, favoured locations for housing, comprehensive guidelines on design standards, etc., are normally found in or identified by the plan. You can view the plan at any time during office hours at the planning authority offices or local libraries.

### 8. What if I need a septic tank?

If no public sewerage scheme is nearby for the safe disposal of household wastes, you will need a system such as a septic tank and percolation area. Your site will have to be large enough to accommodate this and not all sites or soil types are suitable. On heavy soils, ponding of effluent can lead to public health hazards, nuisance and pollution of watercourses. On light soils or fissured rock, effluent may percolate to groundwater too quickly leading to pollution of wells and groundwater drinking supplies. In either event, septic tank effluent may render water which appears to be clear, pure and with a good taste unfit for human consumption. Technical standards for septic tanks and percolation systems are contained in Standard Recommendation S.R.6:1991, available from NSAI Sales, Eolas, Glasnevin, Dublin 9, phone (01) 8370101, price £23 (p+p £1 extra). A copy may be consulted in the planning office. S.R.6:1991 also gives advice on possible ways of improving substandard sites.

Depending on the suitability of your site, you may be required to submit percolation and trial hole tests, carried out in conformity with S.R.6:1991, with your planning application. The planning authority may require these to be independently certified, or nominate someone to carry them out. You should check their

requirements before submitting the application.

### 9. Should I consult any other people or bodies?

It is in your interest to contact the ESB to find out if your proposed site can be supplied with electricity, and at what cost. It may not be enough to choose your site because it is near existing electricity lines. Other safety and technical requirements could affect the feasibility of your site. For this reason, you are advised to contact your local ESB office about any overhead lines close to or crossing your site. You must do so where any overhead lines are within 23 metres of the construction works.

It may also be in your interest to contact your new neighbours to advise them of your plans. It may be possible to alleviate any worries they have by modifying your proposal. This can help avoid objections being lodged to your application, or an appeal at a later stage.

### 10. Can I clear a site or demolish old buildings before planning permission is granted?

Planning permission would not generally be required for basic site clearance. However, making or widening an access onto a public road, the demolition of a structure which was last used as a residence, demolition of a building in a terrace or one which is attached to another building in separate ownership, and other works, do need permission, either separately or with the planning permission for the house. It should never be assumed that planning permission will be granted, no matter how routine the application may seem to you. Any work, even where permission is not required, which is undertaken prior to a decision on an application could be wasted.

### 11. Do I need any other type of permission?

All new buildings must comply with the building regulations, which set out basic design and construction requirements. Details of the regulations and of the need to give notice to the building control authority (normally your local authority) that you intend to carry out building works to which the regulations apply, may be obtained from your local authority. Details explaining the requirements of the building regulations are in PL.11, A Guide to the Building Regulations.