

Guidance Note 1

General Guidance for Agents and Applicants

WHAT ARE BUILDING STANDARDS?

Building Standards Regulations are the statutory system designed to ensure the health and safety of the public in and around buildings, support the conservation of fuel and power, and encourage sustainable development.

WHAT IS A BUILDING WARRANT?

A Building Warrant is required **before** you undertake almost any building operation. This includes **demolition** and **change of use/conversion**. Building Warrant is the approval granted by a Local Authority in order that a building may be constructed, converted/use changed, extended, altered or demolished. It is important to understand that it is the responsibility of the building owner to apply for and obtain Building Warrant. Some small-scale buildings are exempt. Building Standards Officers will be happy to advise you, so please contact them **before** you start any building works. It is an offence to start works without a Building Warrant. Building Standards Officers are part of the Regeneration and Planning Service of Inverclyde Council, and can be found at Municipal Buildings, Clyde Square, Greenock.

More information on building standards and associated procedures can be found on the Inverclyde Council web site at www.inverclyde.gov.uk and at the Scottish Building Standards Division website at <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/Building/Building-standards> (in particular the Procedural and Technical Handbooks).

MAKING A BUILDING WARRANT APPLICATION

The Scottish Government has set a target of 75% of each key building warrant related process being done electronically. If you apply for a building warrant online, by using the eBuilding Standards Scotland link at <https://www.ebuildingstandards.scot/eBuildingStandardsClient/default.aspx> you can help us to meet this target. This will also save you printing and delivery costs!

If you submit on paper, the Building Warrant Application form should be accompanied by at least **3 sets of plans**, unless otherwise agreed prior to application, 1 set of which should be coloured or highlighted to easily distinguish existing from proposed works. This application should contain sufficient information about the proposed design and construction. A professional need not prepare these plans. The plans should, however, be of a sufficient standard to convey the detail required by the Building Standards (Scotland) Regulations 2004 or as stated in the Technical Handbooks. It may, however, be necessary to submit complex technical details and in this instance the services of a competent person is strongly recommended.

A fee is required to accompany all applications, although those relating to modifications within dwellings to cater for disabilities are free. The fee is calculated on a sliding scale basis relative to the estimated cost of the proposed works – see Annex A of 'Building Warrant Application Form Notes for Guidance'. Estimated cost of works should reflect the cost of labour and materials. No concessions can be made for self-build applicants. The value of works may be verified during the processing of your application. The fee cannot be refunded once the application is registered.

Fee discounts are available at the application stage if you elect to submit a Certificate from an Approved Certifier of Design or an Approved Certificate of Construction – see Annex B of 'Building Warrant Application Form Notes for Guidance'. Please note that applications that require structural calculations and are not accompanied by a Certificate from an Approved Certifier of Design will take longer to determine.

On receipt of your application it will be registered and passed to the appropriate officer for vetting.

PLANS REQUIRED

Location Plan

To a scale of 1/1250 or 1/2500 clearly showing:

- The location of the proposed development in relation to the nearest road junction;

Block/Site Plan

To a scale of at least 1/500 showing:

- Existing and proposed buildings;
- The extent and boundaries of the site;
- The north point and the scale of the plan.

The Works

With regard to adequacy of design you may elect to either provide a Certificate completed by an Approved Certifier of

Design or to demonstrate by other acceptable means, such as calculations, that the design as submitted complies with the requirements of the Building Standards legislation. Details of Approved Certifiers of Design may be found on the Certification Register at <http://www.certificationregister.co.uk/>

Whether certified or not, the following information should be supplied by plans, sections and elevations - to a metric scale of not less than 1:100 - giving a complete representation of the proposals as follows –

- 1 Constructional details of all relevant parts of the building;
- 2 Structural detailing as appropriate;
- 3 Clear indication of location of compartment and separating walls and floors and fire escape routes and details of fire resistant constructions;
- 4 Floor areas and proposed occupancy capacities of assembly and entertainment buildings, shops and offices;
- 5 Internal and external plumbing and drainage as appropriate;
- 6 Ventilation and electrical arrangements;
- 7 Details of energy efficiency/heat loss, and
- 8 Any other details as may be necessary for the Verifier to establish compliance.

Each drawing must have a clearly marked unique reference number, including amendment identifier.

CONVERSION (Descriptions below are to be used on the warrant application)

Any change in the occupation or use of a building which falls into one of the following descriptions is considered a conversion to which the building regulations apply: Change in the occupation or use of –

- 1 a building to create a dwelling or dwellings or a part thereof
- 2 a building ancillary to a dwelling to increase the area of human occupation
- 3 a building which alters the number of dwellings in a building
- 4 a domestic building to any other type of building
- 5 a residential building to any other type of building
- 6 a residential building which involve a significant alteration of the characteristics of the persons who occupy, or will occupy, the building, or which significantly increase the number of people occupying, or expected to occupy, the building
- 7 a building so that it becomes a residential building
- 8 an exempt building (in terms of schedule 1) to a building which is not so exempt
- 9 a building to allow access by the public where previously there was none
- 10 a building to accommodate parts in different occupation where previously it was not so occupied.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU APPLY?

Building Standards Officers will endeavour to check your application within 20 working days of receipt of the correct fee and validation of your application. Please note that applications that require structural calculations and are not accompanied by a Certificate from an Approved Certifier of Design will take longer to determine. Your application may be deemed refused if no report is issued for 3 months, allowing you to appeal to the Sheriff.

If your application shows full compliance with the Regulations, the Building Warrant will be issued together with further guidance notes containing important information regarding procedures.

However, if you have not provided sufficient detail, you will be requested to provide further technical information. In this case you will receive a letter noting the outstanding points and requesting the extra information needed to enable us to ensure you are complying with the standards. The application will then be held (9 months without a response from yourself may be deemed refused) until adequate responses to the points raised have been received. When you have submitted satisfactory revised plans in triplicate you will receive your Building Warrant. Whilst the Council make every effort to ensure your proposals comply with all Regulations, **the final responsibility lies with you.**

The Building Warrant process is **not** a quality control process. If you require supervision of work you should employ a suitably qualified agent. If, during the work, you need to alter any detail please discuss this **before commencing** as you may need a formal amendment to your warrant.

OTHER PERMISSIONS?

The Development Management Section of Regeneration and Planning, also based in the Municipal Buildings, will be able to advise you of any requirement to obtain planning permission, listed building consent, conservation area consent and/or advertisement consent. They may be contacted directly on 01475 712406 or e-mail:

devcont.planning@inverclyde.gov.uk. **It is your responsibility to ensure that you obtain any other necessary consents; you should make sure that underground services - gas, water, electricity, sewers, and overhead power lines, etc. are protected or diverted as necessary after consultation with the appropriate authority.**