

Building Control Solutions

Homeowner Guide 5

Garage Conversions



Garage Conversions

Do I need Building Regulation approval? - YES

To convert a non-habitable part of a building and to use it for habitable purposes will require an application under the Building Regulations.

A guide to submitting an application

Once you have decided to go ahead with your building proposals, one of your first tasks will be to submit a Building Regulation Application. You may make this by one of two methods, either:-

- A Full Plans Application
- A Building Notice Application

Which method shall I use?

A summary of the two alternative methods of application and their respective benefits, are outlined on our website and in our Homeowner Guide 2.

Homeowner Guides are available to download from our website or by contacting our business support team.

How much will it cost to make an application?

The charge payable with a Full Plans Application is paid generally in two stages, the first part when the application is submitted, the second following invoicing after the work commences on site. The Charge payable with a Building Notice is paid in full when the Notice is submitted. A separate guidance leaflet on Building Control Charges is available on our website or alternatively by contacting our business support team.

The alternatives

The Building Regulation approval process, whether you use the Full Plans Route or the Building Notice Route, is split into two parts:

- Submitting an application
- Work on site

Full Plans Application

Two copies of the plan are submitted with a copy of a Full Plans Application Form and Plan Charge.

What must the plans show?

The plans must show the proposed floor layout, sections through various parts of the alterations showing methods of construction etc. and elevations to show the changes. A location plan (scale 1:2500 or 1:1250) will also be required. The plans and accompanying details should at least show the following:

- How the garage door is to be filled in i.e. foundations, beams, lintels, wall construction, damp proof courses etc.
- How the existing external walls will resist the passage of moisture if they are not already cavity construction. Thermal insulation should be provided to walls, floor and roof
- The window(s) will have sufficient opening area to provide adequate rapid ventilation an background ventilation. Sometimes windows also need to be suitable for means of escape in case of fire

- Details will be required for any new heating appliance, such as a gas fire. Permanent ventilation may be required to some heating appliances
- Details will be required of the proposed floor (including a damp proof membrane), together with details of sub-floor ventilation if the floor is suspended
- Electrical work should be carried out by a Competent Person registered with an electrical Self-Certification Scheme authorised by the Secretary of State. Please confirm that electrical work will be carried out by a Competent Person as above

A report will normally be given within 15 working days of you making an application. This will identify what needs to be done to comply with the Regulations.

Building Notice Application

A copy of the application form must be submitted, together with the Building Notice Charge. 48 hours after receipt of a valid application and the commencement notice; work may start on site. This is however, subject to receiving required Planning Permission or other statutory consents.

What do I do before commencing building work?

It is advisable to make arrangements to discuss the proposed work before starting. This may help prevent unnecessary or abortive work. The Building Control Surveyor will discuss the work and agree an inspection regime.

Site inspections

The Council must be notified when various stages are nearing completion so that inspections can be carried out. Our Homeowner Guide 17 gives advice on the site inspection procedure. You will be supplied with a copy of your own personal Inspection Plan for your project when you submit your application.

The completion inspection - The final seal of approval

When you have finished the building work and we have carried out a satisfactory completion inspection, a Completion Certificate will be issued to the applicant free of charge, subject to the payment of any outstanding Inspection Charges payable for the work. This Certificate of Completion or 'seal of approval' is issued subject to sufficient work having been inspected to ascertain compliance with the Building Regulations. It is therefore of the utmost importance that you ensure that your builder requests all the relevant statutory inspections that are required. These are listed on the acknowledgement letter that you will receive on submission of your Building Regulation application. Failure to obtain all the necessary inspections will mean that a Completion Certificate will not be issued.

This certificate is also required by solicitors as part of the house sale process to prove that the work complies with the Building Regulations. It will be needed if you sell your property in the future. This may also delay the sale of your property, because if the completion inspection has not been carried out it will be declared as an outstanding matter on any legal search carried out, by your purchaser's solicitors.

We would recommend this certificate is kept safe, possibly with the deeds of your property. Please remember, future copies will not be obtainable.

Please note that it will not be possible to carry out a completion inspection at a later date, such as when the property is sold.

Providing guidance

Please consult our Building Control Solutions team prior to making an application. Our service is there to help if you are in any doubts over requirements or require further information.

Visit our website

For a wealth of information including application forms, guidance on charges and latest news in the world of Building Control, why not visit our website at: www.bcsolutions.org.uk

Party Wall etc. Act 1996

Advice should be taken from a suitably qualified surveyor or legal expert on the possible implications of the above Act. Our Homeowner Guide 13 will help give you an introduction to the Act.

Other approvals

In addition to a Building Regulation approval you may also require Planning Permission in certain circumstances. Please contact the relevant authority's Development Control team for further advice.



Tel: 0300 790 0580
www.bcsolutions.org.uk

