

What is the Development Control service?

The Development Control service is part of the Department of Environmental Services which has responsibility for many roles within the Council including environmental health, highways, building control and recycling. Each year the Development Control service receives over 1000 applications for householder, commercial and new housing developments in the Borough. It seeks to encourage good development whilst preventing bad, ensuring consistency and controlling unauthorised development. 'Development' is defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as "the carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land."

How can I contact Development Control Service or inspect plans?

The Development Control service can be contacted directly by any of the following means:

Telephone:	01992 785510/785565/785567
Fax:	01992 643386
Minicom:	01992 785581
E-mail:	planning@broxbourne.gov.uk
In person:	Council Offices, Bishops College, Churchgate, Cheshunt, between 8.30am and 5.30pm Monday to Friday. A duty planning officer is available between 9am and 5pm without a prior appointment.

Hoddesdon One Stop Shop, Unit 42 Tower Centre, Hoddesdon between 9.30am and 10.30am every Monday

Waltham Cross One Stop Shop, 123 High Street, Waltham Cross between 9.30am and 10.30am every Wednesday

A planning officer is also available on a Saturday morning between 9am and 1pm at the Council offices.

Plans are available for inspection at the following locations:

North of the Borough:	Hoddesdon One Stop Shop, Unit 42 Tower Centre, Hoddesdon between 9am and 5.30pm Monday to Friday
Cheshunt area:	Wolsey Hall One Stop Shop, Windmill Lane, Cheshunt between 9am and 5.30pm Monday to Friday
South East of the railway:	Waltham Cross One Stop Shop, 123 High Street, Waltham Theobalds Cross between 9am and 4pm Monday to Friday
All applications:	Council Offices, Bishops College, Churchgate, Cheshunt, between 8.30am and 5.30pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 1 pm on Saturday, with late opening on Tuesday until 7.30pm

Please note that all One Stop Shops close at 3.30pm on the last Thursday of each month for staff training. Should you have any physical difficulties in reaching any of the Council's offices to inspect plans please contact the Service via any of the methods above to make alternative arrangements.

The Council can provide Italian assistance on request.

Before Making A Planning Application

Is planning permission always required to increase the size of my house?

No, in some cases the proposed work could fall under 'permitted development rights' which grant permission without the need for a planning application. The Council has a range of leaflets which advise on which types of development need planning permission or alternatively contact the service by any of the methods above.

What are 'permitted development' rights?

Some house alterations, minor extensions, agricultural and telecommunication developments benefit from these rights which mean that planning permission is granted by national legislation without the need to apply to the Council. However, you should always check with the Council's Building Control Service to see whether the works you wish to undertake need to comply with the Building Regulations. Many alterations need to comply with the Building Regulations even though they do not need planning permission.

How do I check what 'permitted development' rights apply to my property?

Contact the Development Control Service by any of the means shown above.

What if my proposal doesn't fall within 'permitted development'?

Then planning permission is required.

What is the difference between planning permission and the Building Regulations?

A planning application assesses the impacts of a proposal on the appearance and character of the building and the area or the enjoyment or privacy of nearby residents. It will assess where a use or other development is an appropriate use for a site. Building Regulations are concerned more with the structural side of construction and will look at areas such as drainage, construction techniques, ventilation and fire safety. Many developments require the approval of both services and some require consent from one or the other only. It is strongly recommended that both services are contacted before works are commenced.

Can you recommend someone to draw the plans for me?

The Council cannot recommend agents, but some can be found in the Yellow Pages and other directories under headings including 'architectural consultants', 'town planning consultants', 'architects' and 'surveyors'. Alternatively the current applications can be viewed to see agents used by other people.

Can I do the drawings myself?

The drawings must be drawn in metric and to scale and must be of a high enough standard for members of the public to understand what is proposed and for a good record of what has been approved/refused to be retained. If you consider that you can achieve this then you may do them yourself

Can I discuss my application before submitting it?

The Council encourages pre-application discussions with planning officers in order that positive improvements and possible problems can be identified. A duty planning officer is available at the Council offices without an appointment between 9am and 5pm during the week, between 9.30am and 10.30am on Monday at the Hoddesdon One Stop Shop, between 9.30am and 10.30am on Wednesday at the Waltham Cross One Stop Shop and on a Saturday morning at the Council offices between 9.00am-1.00pm.

Making A Planning Application

How do I make a planning application?

A set of forms will need to be completed which come with explanatory notes. The application forms must be accompanied by full sets of accurate plans showing the proposed development and its location and will normally need to be accompanied by a fee to assist in the cost of processing the application.

Who can make a planning application?

Anybody can apply for planning permission and you do not have to be the landowner, although they do need to be formally advised. The grant of planning permission does not override the ownership rights of the landowner.

How do I get application forms?

Application forms are available from the Council offices in person and can be downloaded from the Council's website at www.broxbourne.gov.uk. Forms can also be posted to you by telephoning 01992 785510/785565/785567 or by e-mailing your request.

Why do I need to pay a fee?

Most planning applications are required by Government legislation to be accompanied by a fee. The fee assists in covering the cost of processing the application. Some applications do not require a fee, including those for extensions or alterations to a registered disabled persons dwelling to improve their access to or within the dwelling or to provide facilities for their greater safety, health or comfort.

Why are so many sets of plans required?

The Council requests 7 copies of all drawings due to the number of places that they are sent. Copies are available for public inspection at Bishops' College or at one of the one stop shops. One copy must be retained on file for future inspection by law, one is returned endorsed once a decision is made and the others are sent to various statutory bodies who are consulted. The cost of submitting the application is therefore borne by those submitting the application rather than the local population.

After Submitting Your Planning Application

What happens after I hand in my planning application?

The application is checked to ensure all the necessary plans and documentation have been submitted and the appropriate fee has been paid. A record of the application is made on the Council's property registers (used for Land Charges searches, for example). A consultation process is undertaken, a planning officer makes a site inspection, negotiation to improve the application may take place and a decision will then be made.

How long does a planning application take?

The Council endeavours to deal with the vast majority of householder applications within the 8-week period sought by Government. However, some larger and more complex cases take longer.

Will my application go to Committee?

About 90 % of applications, including the vast majority of householder applications, are dealt with by the Director of Environmental Services or the Director of Environmental Services in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning and Licensing Committee under powers delegated to them by the Council. Major developments, most changes of use, multiple dwellings and applications with significant levels of objection go before a committee of elected councillors for decision at a public meeting.

What happens at Committee?

The applications on the agenda (which is published 7 days in advance) are presented to the Members of the committee who may discuss the application and will then make a decision with guidance from the Director of Environmental Services and senior members of the Development Control Service.

Can I speak at Committee?

No - all representations must be made in writing in advance of the meeting.

Consultations and Objecting To A Planning Application

Why did I not get a letter about a development? /

Why are some applications advertised in the paper and others are not?

Some proposals, including major developments and those affecting Listed Buildings or Conservation Areas, require an advertisement in a local newspaper by law. Different types of development are advertised to different levels - the Council publishes two leaflets which give more information on this. The most common method is by writing to immediate neighbours.

How do I object to a proposal?

You may write to the Director of Environmental Services to make representations either in support or against. Objections must be made in writing and should be sent by post, by e-mail or delivered by hand. If you would like your letter to be acknowledged you should enclose a stamped addressed envelope and all those making comments will be notified of the Council's decision.

Can I challenge the grant of planning permission?

There is no statutory right of appeal by objectors against a grant of planning permission. The only way a planning permission may be challenged is by judicial review, permission for which is granted by the Courts.

Does an objection mean my application will be refused?

The Council can only take into account representations made about 'planning matters' which mainly cover matters relating to the built environment. Matters which cannot be considered include property values, land ownership and civil matters such as boundary disputes, encroachment or private covenants. Planning applications which do not comply with the Local Plan are refused unless national planning guidance from Government or other material considerations provide sufficient reason for planning permission to be granted.

What can I do if planning permission is refused?

Initially discuss the case with a planning officer to see if the reason(s) for refusal can be overcome. You have the right to appeal and for the case to be considered by an independent Government appointed inspector if an agreement cannot be reached.

Unauthorised Development

What does the Council do about unauthorised development?

The Council has a duty to look at all breaches of planning control such as new buildings or uses which do not have planning permission or have been undertaken without complying with conditions laid down by previous planning permissions.

What action is taken against unauthorised development?

If the development may be acceptable then an application to regularise the situation is normally invited so that it may be properly considered. However if the development is not acceptable then enforcement action may be taken to remove the breach.

What is enforcement action?

This will normally be a notice setting out the actions required to put right the problem. Failure to comply with the notice is an offence that can be prosecuted in the Courts.

Other General Queries

What is a Listed Building?

Buildings which are included on a Statutory List prepared by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport as being of special architectural or historic merit and which are subject to special planning control. Proposals to alter or demolish them, including internal structural changes, require specific Listed Building Consent. Nationally 2% of listed buildings are Grade I (of exceptional interest), 4% are Grade II* (particularly important buildings of special interest) and the remaining 94% are Grade II (of special interest). The list can be inspected at the main Council Offices.

How can I find out the location of my boundaries?

The Council does not keep land ownership records and has no powers to rule where they are in boundary disputes. Land ownership records are held at HM Land Registry Stevenage on 01438 788889