

Do I need to get planning permission for the changes I want to make to my home?

If you're thinking about doing works on your house or garden, one of the things you will be thinking about (or should be thinking about!) is if you need to obtain planning permission. In most cases you will need planning permission, but there are a few occasions where you don't.

Probably the most common example of works which do not require planning consent are repairs or decorations carried out in the home itself. If your property is a protected building however, you may need to obtain consent for even these kinds of works.

Similarly, you will not need planning permission to build a porch, an extension to your house, a garage or a shed, install a roof-light or satellite dish on the roof of your house or place a flagpole, oil tank or caravan in your garden, surface the entrance to your house, erect a fence along the boundary or, if you are lucky, build a swimming pool, provided that those works meet the requirements set out in Guernsey planning law.

These requirements are not to be taken lightly - to name just a few of them, the floor area of an extension cannot exceed 20 square metres or face the road, the walls of a shed have to be made of timber, natural stone or rendered blockwork, you can only have one satellite dish on your property which cannot exceed 90cm, a flagpole cannot exceed 5m and a caravan cannot be used for human habitation (this means that you cannot invite friends to stay in it while the caravan is on your property). You probably get the gist; the legal requirements relate mainly to size, location, materials and use. Full details of these requirements can be found on [the States' website](#) or for [more information](#).

You should also be aware of certain pitfalls:

1. Protected buildings - if your house is a protected building, any works that you carry out on it may need planning permission.
2. Protected trees - if the works are likely to affect a protected tree (that is, a tree which is the subject of a tree protection order), then again you may need consent.
3. Conservation areas and sites of special significance - different rules may apply if your property is within these areas or sites.
4. Flats/maisonettes - again, stricter requirements apply in respect of flats/maisonettes.
5. Existing planning permissions - existing planning permission in respect of your property may prevent you from doing some works unless you obtain new planning permission.
6. Building Regulations - while the works may not require planning permission, you may still need to apply for Building Regulations' consent.
7. Title - you should check the title documents of your property as, on occasion, they impose restrictions as to what you can do or cannot do, particularly if your house is a flat or part of a managed housing estate.

If you are in doubt you should arrange a pre-planning application consultation with the States' planning department or obtain legal advice.

The information and expressions of opinion contained in this guide are not intended to be a comprehensive study or to provide legal advice and should not be treated as a substitute for specific advice concerning individual situations.

Contact Us

For a friendly chat call the residential property team on
+44 1481 721672 or email gsy@ogierproperty.com

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