

What is the difference between Planning Permission and Building Regulations Approval?

Most new buildings or changes to existing buildings and land, or to the local environment, need consent, known as planning permission. Obtaining planning permission approval is a separate matter from building regulations approval.

Planning is concerned with the holistic planning of Gibraltar, covering both built-up and natural areas. It includes the use and appearance of buildings and land, roads, landscaping and the impact of development on the environment.

Building Regulations set standards for the design and construction of buildings with particular regard for the health and safety of the people who use or move around those buildings. They impose requirements to ensure conservation of fuel and power and ensure that appropriate facilities are provided for people, including those with disabilities, to be able to access and circulate within those buildings.

Are there different types of Planning Permission?

There are two types of planning permission; outline planning permission and planning permits (often referred to as 'full' or 'formal' planning permission) and it is important to understand the difference between them:

- **Outline Planning Permission** – This is an in-principle approval of a proposed development, once granted, an applicant then must apply for a planning permit (see below). The granting of outline planning permission DOES NOT authorise a person to commence works. It is up to the applicant whether or not s/he applies for outline planning permission in advance of an application for a planning permit. Normally, outline planning is sought in larger or more complex applications, or where the proposed development may raise contention.
- **Planning Permit** – This approval is granted on planning grounds for the full detail of the proposed development. This grant authorises the commencement of works from the planning point of view, but applicants should ensure that they also have any other necessary approvals, such as listed building consent, building regulations approval and landlord's approval. Both outline planning permission and planning permits can be granted with conditions and it is imperative that an applicant meets them.