

# SWIFT UNLIMITED

*Garden Rooms / Living Annexes / Extensions*

## PLANNING PERMISSON GUIDE

SWIFT Garden Rooms and Home Extensions can often be built without having to make a full planning application. This guide will help you understand more about this subject so that you are able to make well-informed decisions.



## OVERVIEW

Planning Permission is a complicated subject. The official guidelines may seem clear, but there are grey areas. We always recommend that you take time to satisfy yourself that your investment in your project is not in contravention of national or local planning laws. We can help you with this and can, when requested, refer you to professional specialists who can provide further guidance and advice.

## GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

The Planning Portal provides a wealth of information, and you can access this at [www.planningportal.co.uk](http://www.planningportal.co.uk). There you can read for yourself the guidance on all aspects of home improvement and development. Of particular use are the mini guides that summarize the key points relating to garden rooms (these come under the heading of Outbuildings) and for home extensions.

## NATIONAL AND REGIONAL VARIATIONS

The information on the planning portal relates to property in England. If you live in Wales or Scotland, then different conditions may apply and should be checked locally.

In addition, some local authorities in England impose special conditions that may affect the availability of Permitted Development. Sometimes this relates to designated areas such as Conservation Areas, or it may involve a removal of PD (Permitted Development) where they feel they need to keep closer control on proposed building projects. This can occasionally apply to new housing estates where, for example, high density building has been allowed and the local authority may want to exert control over further extension and outbuilding works.

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## THE PRINCIPAL OF PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

To avoid the need for making a planning application for relatively minor and non-invasive projects, the government introduced Permitted Development Rights. This allows a range of home improvement projects to be undertaken without any planning permission, providing that certain conditions and criteria are adhered to. The key points are as follows (this section is a direct copy of the planning portal):



## OUTBUILDINGS – GARDEN ROOMS

Outbuildings (the term that Planners use for all detached structures – including Garden Rooms) are usually considered to be permitted development, not needing planning permission, subject to the limits and conditions below. Importantly, a Garden Room will always require Full Planning Permission if it is to be used for overnight accommodation. Therefore, all Living Annexes will require Planning Permission.

- No outbuilding on land forward of a wall forming the principal elevation.
- Outbuildings and garages to be single storey with maximum eaves height of 2.5 meters and maximum overall height of four meters with a dual pitched roof or three meters for any other roof.
- Maximum height of 2.5 meters in the case of a building, enclosure, or container within two meters of a boundary of the curtilage of the dwelling house.
- No verandas, balconies or raised platforms.
- No more than half the area of land around the "original house"\* would be covered by additions or other buildings.
- In National Parks, the Broads, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and World Heritage Sites the maximum area to be covered by buildings, enclosures, containers, and pools more than 20 meters from house to be limited to 10 square meters.
- On designated land\*\* buildings, enclosures, containers, and pools at the side of properties will require planning permission.
- Within the curtilage of listed buildings any outbuilding will require planning permission.

\*The term "original house" means the house as it was first built or as it stood on 1 July 1948 (if it was built before that date). Although you may not have built an extension to the house, a previous owner may have done so.

\*\*Designated land includes national parks and the Broads, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, conservation areas and World Heritage Sites.

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## SINGLE-STOREY EXTENSIONS

This guidance reflects temporary increases to the size limits for single-storey rear extensions that must be completed by 30 May 2019, and the associated neighbour consultation scheme.

An extension or addition to your house is considered to be permitted development, not requiring an application for planning permission, subject to the following limits and conditions:

- No more than half the area of land around the "original house"\* would be covered by additions or other buildings.
- No extension forwards of the principal elevation or side elevation fronting a highway.
- No extension to be higher than the highest part of the roof.
- Single-storey rear extension must not extend beyond the rear wall of the original house\* by more than three meters if an attached house or by four meters if a detached house.
- In addition, outside Article 2(3) designated land\* and Sites of Special Scientific Interest the limit is increased to 6m if an attached house and 8m if a detached house until 30 May 2019.
- These increased limits (between 3m and 6m and between 4m and 8m respectively) are subject to the prior notification of the proposal to the Local Planning Authority and the implementation of a neighbour consultation scheme. If objections are received, the proposal might not be allowed.
- Maximum height of a single-storey rear extension of four meters.
- Extensions of more than one storey must not extend beyond the rear wall of the original house\* by more than three meters.
- Maximum eaves height of an extension within two meters of the boundary of three meters.
- Maximum eaves and ridge height of extension no higher than existing house.
- Side extensions to be single storey with maximum height of four meters and width no more than half that of the original house.
- Two-storey extensions no closer than seven meters to rear boundary.
- Roof pitch of extensions higher than one storey to match existing house.
- Materials to be similar in appearance to the existing house.
- No verandas, balconies or raised platforms.
- Upper-floor, side-facing windows to be obscure-glazed; any opening to be 1.7m above the floor.
- On designated land\*\* no permitted development for rear extensions of more than one storey.
- On designated land no cladding of the exterior.
- On designated land no side extensions.

\* The term "original house" means the house as it was first built or as it stood on 1 July 1948 (if it was built before that date). Although you may not have extended the house, a previous owner may have done so.

\*\* Designated land includes conservation areas, national parks and the Broads, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and World Heritage Sites.

Please note: The permitted development allowances described here apply to houses and not to:

- Flats and maisonettes (view our guidance on flats and maisonettes)
- Converted houses or houses created through the permitted development rights to change use (as detailed in our change of use section)
- Other buildings
- Areas where there may be a planning condition, Article 4 Direction or other restriction that limits permitted development rights.

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## YOUR OPTIONS

If you aim to complete your project within Permitted Development Rights:

Many cases are straightforward, and our clients often choose to proceed, comfortable with the guidance that is given by the planning portal and by adhering to the relevant conditions. Where there is any doubt as to whether Permitted Development applies, or where it is prudent to obtain written confirmation of the planning status of the project, then the following steps can be considered:

- Ask the planning department for advice and clarification (each authority has its own systems, from a free phone call with a planning officer to a formal, paid-for, application).
- Apply for a Certificate of Lawfulness (involving the preparation of information and drawings of the development, completion of standard forms and the payment of fees).

If your project does not fall under Permitted Development:

Bearing in mind the long-lasting benefits of your new space, then perhaps it is worthwhile accepting the added time and expense of submitting a full planning application. Like the Certificate of Lawfulness provides proof that the project can proceed without planning permission, obtaining the permission does give you the written confirmation of legal conformity.

How to apply for Planning Permission?

Swift have considerable experience over many years of helping clients obtain the permission that they sometimes require. Planning departments are often under considerable pressure, so the need for accurate and well-worded applications is even more important. Here are your two main options:

- Make your own application – this can be done via the Planning Portal, online. You will need supporting plans and drawings which, in the case of a home-extension, include full drawings of the property as it is now, and the proposed layout. There are companies from whom you can purchase location and block plans, but you will need to add outlines and indications of the extent of the new building.
- Employ a specialist to prepare the drawings and plans and make the submission on your behalf. This can be a person or company that you already know (architect, planning consultant, etc).
- At Swift we can handle the whole procedure – preparing all the drawings and plans together with a detailed Design and Access Statement. We use experienced professionals who have an excellent knowledge of this particular aspect of planning, and we will monitor the process through to completion.

In both the above cases, Swift will share our building design drawings and images to assist with the process and to help keep your costs down. We do require a payment of £1,000 for the use of these – this deposit then being deducted from the project costs when an order can be placed following the successful planning process. If the application is not successful, then we will return the deposit in full. In addition, we will require a non-refundable fee that covers the professional fees and purchase of drawings. This is £1,600.00 including VAT.

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## WHAT NEXT?

Your Swift team are keen to work with you and create a building that matches your aspirations. Something that makes you smile with satisfaction whenever you use it. Please contact us on 01625 875588 or [support@swiftorg.co.uk](mailto:support@swiftorg.co.uk) so that we can continue that process.