

# Building Control Charges Guidance

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# **This guide supplements the Building Control Charges and answers some frequently asked questions**

## **What is the purpose of the charges?**

The purpose of the charges is to **establish a price which covers the cost of the service** so the applicant only pays for the service they need.

When controllable building work under the Building Regulations is proposed the London Borough of Barnet may use the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010 to establish a charge for that service. There are two methods which can be used:

- A standard charge based on a defined category of work or estimated cost
- An individually determined charge/quotation

## **Which table in the charges should I use?**

**Table A: Domestic New Build** – This table is intended for new dwellings which have a floor area not exceeding 300m<sup>2</sup>.

**Table B: Domestic Extension** – This table is intended for existing dwellings which have proposals to extend, convert or materially alter the building. This includes internal works and in some cases detached outbuildings.

**Table C: Non-Domestic New Build** – This table is intended for new non-domestic buildings which have a floor area not exceeding 100m<sup>2</sup>. This includes office, shop, commercial, assembly, recreational and industrial use.

**Table D: Non-Domestic Extension** – This table is intended for existing non-domestic buildings which have proposals to extend, convert or materially alter the building. This includes shop fit-outs and shopping centre kiosks.

**Table E: Other Services** – This table is intended for statutory functions that the service may undertake and business support administration. This includes demolition and dangerous structures.

## **What basis is used to determine floor area or estimated cost?**

When selecting a charge on the basis of floor area, **the area should only be measured internally taking account the extended floor area**. For basement, garage or loft conversion work the floor area represents the area which changes to habitable use.

Estimated cost of work means **an estimate accepted by the service, which represents a reasonable amount that would be charged for the carrying out of that work** by a person in business to carry out such work.

This definition means that no reduction can be allowed for DIY work. Estimates should exclude VAT, land acquisition costs, internal decoration costs, floor coverings and fittings and professional fees paid to architects, engineers or surveyors. Where subject to a quotation, it will be beneficial to have sight of an elemental breakdown of costs if one is available.

## Can I aggregate floor area across multiple categories of work? Will a discount apply?

When aggregating floor area, **you can only do so within the same category of work**. For example, if you propose to build a single storey 30m<sup>2</sup> rear and 10m<sup>2</sup> side extension you may select the charge that covers 'single storey extension (total floor area 6m<sup>2</sup> to 60m<sup>2</sup>)'.

However, should you also wish to undertake a 20m<sup>2</sup> loft conversion and chimney breast removal at the same time you must use another method to calculate the overall charge.

Applications which comprise of multiple elements in B(1): Extension and/or B(2): Material Alteration can apply a **50% discount\*** for each additional element that supplements the main works.

In this example, you would apply a 50% discount for each supplementary category added to the main works (highest charge category) when submitting a Building Notice:

Description/category	Floor area/estimated cost	Charge (net)	Discount
Single storey rear extension	30m <sup>2</sup>	£652.50	-
Single storey side extension	10m <sup>2</sup>		
Loft conversion	20m <sup>2</sup>	£326.25	(£652.50 at 50%)
Chimney breast removal	£2,500	£145.00	(£290.00 at 50%)
	<b>Overall total</b>	<b>£1,123.75</b>	<b>£471.25 saving</b>

\*The percentage discount that can be applied is indicated within the Building Control Charges. Please consult Table B(1): Extension and B(2) Material Alteration for further details. VAT will apply. A discount will **not** apply to any category which relates specifically to electrical work.

## What if the category of work I'm undertaking is not within any of the tables?

If your proposal does not fit into the simplified tables it is likely that **the charge will have to be individually determined**. You should contact us via our email address [building.control@barnet.gov.uk](mailto:building.control@barnet.gov.uk) with a set of plans so we can provide a quotation.

Alternatively, you can ring us on 020 8359 4500.

## What is an individually determined charge?

This method of determining the charge relates mainly to non-domestic projects or larger domestic schemes and is **calculated using the service hourly rate**.

If you are carrying out multiple categories of work to a domestic property all at once, such as a single storey extension, loft conversion and garage conversion, it may be beneficial to request a quotation by this method.

## Will I have to pay VAT?

**You must pay VAT on all charges**, even if work is to a listed building. The only exceptions apply to charges for Regularisation/Reversion applications and services provided in Table E(1): Statutory Function. VAT charged at 20%.

## When are charges payable?

Where Full Plans are submitted, the charges are normally paid in two stages:

- Plan Charge – This is paid at the point of application submission;
- Inspection Charge – This charge is invoiced following the commencement of work on site and is typically payable within 14 days.

**For all other applications, the charge is paid at the point of submission.**

We may agree to the payment of charges by instalments. The amount and timing of instalment payments must be agreed prior to the submission of an application. Payment by instalments would not be appropriate in respect of Plan Charges.

## What method of payment can I use?

**Payment is accepted by cheque, debit or credit card** (including over-the-phone payments). Cheques should be made payable to the '**London Borough of Barnet**'. Online and other methods of payments are also available. Please contact us on 020 8359 4500 for further information.

## Are there any exemptions that apply to the charges?

Up to one hour's **pre-application advice** will be exempt from charge where we provide initial consultation and guidance on meeting the Building Regulations.

**Building work which solely benefits a disabled person, or their carer**, in relation to dwellings will be exempt from charge. A certificate or letter is required from a health professional, for example from a doctor or occupational therapist, in support of an application for exemption.

The above exemption may also apply to buildings to which the public have access for purpose of providing means of access for disabled persons by way of entrance or exit to or from the building or any part of it and/or for the provision of facilities designed to secure the greater health, safety and welfare of disabled persons.

**Building work which is certified by installers registered under a competent person's scheme** will be exempt from charge. This may include the replacement of windows/doors and the installation of heating appliances or electrics.

## What assumptions are made when setting a charge?

Standard charges have been set by the London Borough of Barnet on the basis that **the building work does not consist of, or include, innovative or high-risk construction techniques** and/or the duration of the building work, from **commencement to completion, does not exceed 12 months**.

There is also an assumption that the design and building work will be **undertaken by a person or company that has the competency to ensure that their relevant design and building work demonstrates compliance with the Building Regulations** and that **commencement of work is undertaken within 6 months of submission** of the application/notice.

If this is not the case then the work may incur a supplementary charge.

## What is a supplementary charge?

The service may invoice a supplementary charge **when the original application charge is found not to cover the cost of the service** delivered.

For example, when notifiable **electrical work is not carried out using an appropriately competent/registered electrician** to recover our costs to verify the installation works we may have to instruct a third-party.

For non-domestic projects or larger domestic schemes where it is **deemed necessary by the service to engage a consultant** to assist in the checking/interpretation of complex calculations and/or specialist reports the cost of engaging any such consultant will generate a supplementary charge.

## What is a reactivation charge?

An application will require a reactivation charge where works have commenced on site but have stopped for **more than 5 years**. The service archives an application after this time and it will require retrieval. In addition, these applications may require reallocation and further review.

## General notes

This document is for guidance only and does not substitute for the **full charges scheme** or charges.

The appropriate charge must accompany the application form to allow the application to be deemed deposited. You are advised **not to start work on site until the application is valid**. If a cheque is dishonoured the application will become invalid.

The overall Full Plans charge is **split 40% plan** and **60% inspection** for standard charges.

Regularisation/Reversion applications are charged at **150%** of the equivalent Full Plans or Building Notice.