

Carrying out Alterations to a Leasehold Property

Guide

As the freeholder and landlord of the building, we will offer you support to do this whatever the scope of your project.

In the first instance you must apply for Landlord Consent as it is a condition of your lease to do this. We will look favourably at your application and look to grant Landlord Consent wherever possible. We will also inform you if we decide you cannot make improvements and state the reasons why.

When Landlord Consent is required

You are required to obtain Landlord Consent for the following works:

- Building an extension or conservatory
- Changing the existing internal layout to your leasehold property*
- Installation of a new central heating system
- Removal of walls, both structural and non-structural
- Replacing external doors and/or windows

**If you intend to remove any walls your application must be supported with a structural engineers/surveyors report.*

This is by no means a comprehensive list and if in doubt please contact the Leasehold Team if you need help.

The bigger picture

As landlord of the building and in the interests of good estate management, we need to consider the overall impact of your proposed alterations. For example, when looking at a proposal to extend a ground floor maisonette, we will consider the impact of the extension on the neighbouring residents. We will, for example look at rights of way and whether your plans allow access to the upper part of the building for essential maintenance. Some proposals may also entail writing to neighbouring residents to seek their views and opinions prior to giving permission.



When Landlord Consent is **NOT** required

The following works do not require Landlord Consent but it is advisable that you let us know in writing that you intend to carry them out:

- Internal decoration – most of our leases state that the leaseholder is required to paint the interior of the property on a regular basis
- Replacing carpets/flooring – remember that you are required under law to ensure you lay down adequate sound insulation
- Upgrading bathrooms or kitchens – providing you are not intending to knock down any walls

Other consents and permissions you may need to obtain

Please note that even if you obtain Landlord Consent you may still need other consents and permissions. These include, but are not limited to, Planning Permission, Building Control Notice, and, Building Regulations approval.

You might want to get some pre-application advice from a planning officer. They can provide informal advice on what might be considered acceptable to the Local Planning Authority. Alternatively, you could check if your proposal conforms to the policies in the Local Development Plan.



Informal planning advice can be provided over the telephone, at the Customer Service Centre or more formally by a pre-arranged meeting with a planning officer. All advice is provided on a without prejudice basis and is not binding on any future decision of the Council. For general planning advice you can call our Duty Planners on **01727 819344** or **819345** on Wednesdays between 1pm and 4.45pm or Thursdays between 9am and 12.30pm.

Importance of obtaining Landlord Consent

You may have problems selling your leasehold property if you make alterations without obtaining Landlord Consent. We may have the legal right to rectify any work you have undertaken and restore the property to its original condition. Any costs incurred for doing this may be passed on to you.

In the past, a few leaseholders who were selling their properties had their sales process delayed because they had carried out alterations without obtaining Landlord Consent. The buyer's surveyor or solicitor may ask for Retrospective Landlord Consent to be obtained before proceeding any further with the sale. Our Retrospective Landlord Consent fee is from £200 plus legal costs for dealing with such a request.

Licence for Alterations

A Licence for Alterations is a legal document from the landlord giving the leaseholder consent to carry out works to the leasehold property.

The types of work that requires a Licence for Alterations include, but not limited to:

- Building an extension or conservatory
- Changing the existing internal layout
- Removal of structural walls –

You may also need a Licence for Alterations to remove non-structural walls.

If you intend to remove any walls in your leasehold property we will ask you to send as a copy of a structural engineer's report. You must do this at your own cost.

If a Licence for Alterations is required you will need to pay for our legal costs for carrying out this work.

Deed of Variation

We will require you to enter into a Deed of Variation so that you are responsible for all future repairs and maintenance for some of the alterations you intend to make.

For example, if you are seeking permission to build a conservatory or an extension, this addition, legally speaking, will be counted in future as part of the structure of the building. When we grant permission for you to do this type of work, part of the condition will be for you to meet any future maintenance costs. A Deed of Variation will alter that the terms of the lease so that you are responsible for any future repairs and maintenance of your proposed alteration.



If a Deed of Variation is required you will need to pay our legal costs for carrying out this work. Please note that some alteration and additions that you intend to make may require both a Licence for Alterations and a Deed of Variation.

Getting permission to carry out alterations – a 4 step process

Step 1 – Complete the application form

Complete and return the Leaseholder Alteration Application Form with your fee. The application form can be downloaded from our website or sent to you in the post upon request. All our fees are outlined below.

Step 2 – Get our feedback

After reviewing your application form, liaising with relevant Council departments and seeking the views of your neighbours, the Leasehold Team will either:

- Approve your proposal and let you know if you need to do anything further, such as enter into a Licence for Alterations or a Deed of Variation, or
- Decline your proposal and explain the reasons why.

Step 3 – Get formal application to proceed

If we approve your proposal, we will ask you to send payment for any further fees such as for legal notices.

If no further fees are required we will grant formal Landlord Consent for you to proceed. Please keep this letter, and any other documentation granting consent, in a safe place. You may need these when selling your property.

Step 4 – Get sign off on completion of works

Certain works may require an inspection once they have been completed. The type of work that may require an inspection on completion include, but are not limited to:

- Building an extension or conservatory
- Changing the existing internal layout to your leasehold property
- Installation of a new central heating system
- Removal of walls, both structural and non-structural
- Replacing external doors and/or windows

You should contact the Leasehold Team who may arrange for a Building Surveyor or other Council officer to inspect the work. We will then write to you stating whether we are:

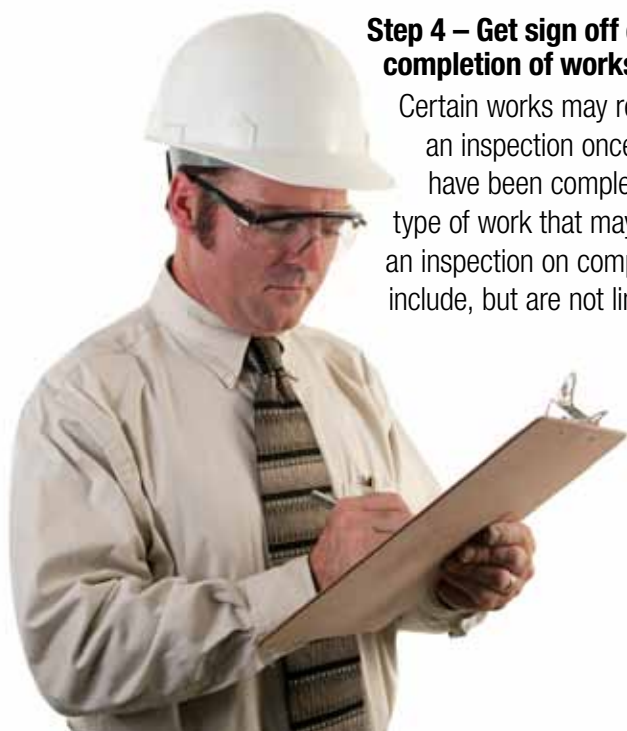
- Satisfied with the work carried out, or
- Not satisfied with the work – we will let you know what needs to put right and arrange a further inspection on completion of the works

We will need copies of any completion certificates and other documentation on completion of the works.

Fees for dealing with leasehold alterations:

Item	£
Completion of application form	50
Licence for Alterations (Legal fees)	From 600
Deed of Variation (Legal fees)	From 600
Joint Licence and Deed (Legal fees)	From 400 to 800
Inspection on completion of works	50
Retrospective Landlord Consent	From £200 plus Legal and other professional fees in addition to costs mentioned above

Please note that you may also need other consents and permissions such as Planning Permission, Building Control Notice, and, Building Regulations approval. There may be separate, chargeable fees for these.



Leasehold Alterations Application Form (LAAF)

This application form should be read in conjunction with the Carrying out Alterations to a Leasehold Property guide.

Section 1: Your Details

Name: _____

Correspondence Address: _____

Tel No: _____

Mobile No: _____

Email: _____

Leasehold Address (If different): _____

Section 2: Type of alteration being proposed (Please tick)

- Building an extension or conservatory
- Changing the existing internal layout to your leasehold property
- Installation of a new central heating system
- Removal of walls, both structural and non-structural*
- Replacing external doors and/or windows
- Other Please state: _____

*If you intend to remove any walls your application must be supported with a structural engineers/surveyors report

Section 3: Enter description of proposed works and any comments here

If you are intending to alter the layout of your leasehold property please complete section 4 and 5.

Section 4: Current layout of your leasehold property

If you are intending to knock down any walls your application must be supported with a structural engineers/surveyors report.

Please use additional pages if necessary and enclose with this application form.

Section 5: Proposed new layout of your leasehold property

If you are intending to knock down any walls your application must be supported with a structural engineers/ surveyors report.

Please use additional pages if necessary and enclose with this application form.

Section 6: Details of proposed professionals carrying out the proposed alterations (architects, contractors, consultants, surveyors etc).

Please use additional pages if necessary and enclose with this application form.

Name	Profession	Contact details

Section 7: Checklist (Please tick)

Please make sure you include the following (if necessary) with your application form

- Application fee* (£50)
- Completed application form
- Structural engineer's/surveyor's report (if necessary)
- Building control letter (if necessary)
- Planning permission (if necessary)

*Please make cheques payable to: St Albans District Council quoting your 8 digit Owner Account Reference number. Please contact the Leasehold Team on 01727 819578 if you need to obtain your 8 digit Owner Account Reference No.

Online Payments – Payments can be made online by going to www.stalbans.gov.uk and follow the links: 1) 'Pay', then 2) 'Council Rent' then, 3) e-paycapita.com, then, 4) Housing Rents & Garages. Please enter your 8 digit Owner Account Reference number as stated on your invoice. Your card details will be taken and payment authorised on-line.

Automated Telephone Debit/credit card payments can now be made 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Simply telephone 0161 785 3880 and section OPTION 2 for Housing Rent and Garage Rents. Please enter your 8 digit Owner Account Reference number stated on your invoice. Please follow the instructions provided.

Section 8: Agreement to terms and conditions

I/we confirm that we have read the Carrying out Alterations to a Leasehold Property guide and will only undertake alterations once Landlord Consent has been granted.

Print Name*	Signature*	Date

*All leaseholders of the property must agree to the terms and conditions.

Send your completed form to: The Leasehold Team, St Albans City & District Council, District Council Offices, St Peter's Street, St Albans, Herts AL1 3JE, or email it to: leasehold@stalbans.gov.uk

Useful Contact

Leasehold Team

Tel: 01727 819578

Email: leasehold@stalbans.gov.uk

LEASE (The Leasehold Advisory Service)

Tel: 020 7832 2500

Email: info@lease-advice.org.uk

Website: www.lease-advice.org

Planning department – Pre-application informal information and advice

Telephone hours:

1.00pm – 4.45pm Wednesdays

9.00am – 12.30pm Thursdays

Tel: 01727 819345 or 01727 819344

Drop in service at the civic centre (first come, first served basis)

Technical support on completing an application

Telephone hours:

2.00pm – 4.00pm Daily

Tel: 01727 819347

Email: planning@stalbans.gov.uk

Submitted applications information and advice

Telephone hours:

2.00pm – 4.00pm Daily

Tel: 01727 866100 and ask for the case officer (the name can be found under the Case Details for the application).

