

Dumfries and Galloway Council

PLANNING SERVICES

Planning for Small Scale Residential Development

July 2017





Planning for Small Scale Residential Development

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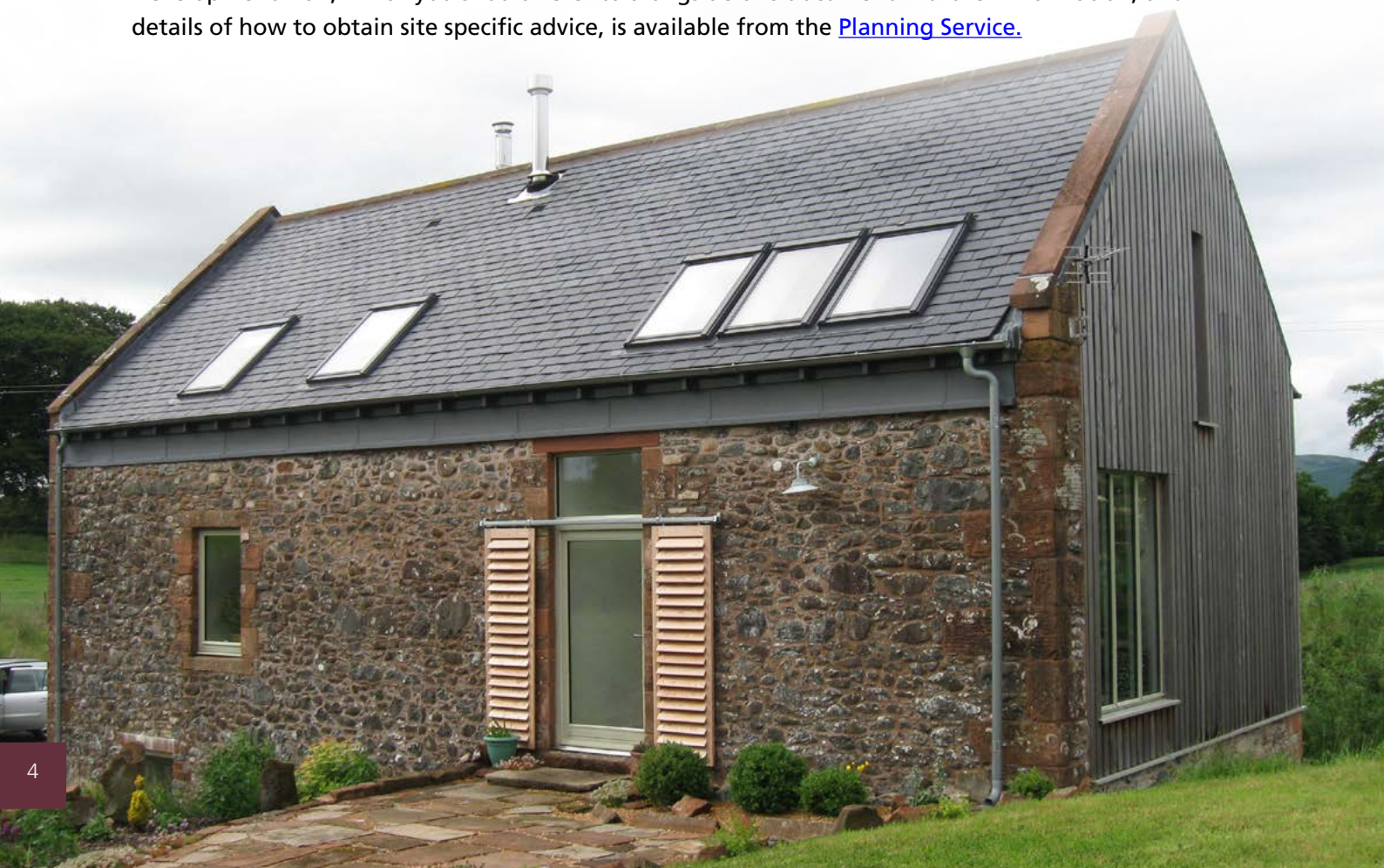
INTRODUCTION

Dumfries and Galloway Council recognises that despite the economic downturn the demand for housing both in terms of need and aspiration still remains. The Local Development Plan, therefore, seeks to provide a range of opportunities to deliver high quality, affordable housing in the right locations.

This document has been produced to assist those planning to build either a single dwellinghouse or a small residential development of up to four houses, including conversion of existing buildings and renovation projects which bring derelict dwellings back into use. It explains what potential self-builders and small scale developers will need to consider in developing their proposals and in preparing a planning application.

Building a single house, or a small number of houses, or undertaking a conversion or renovation can be an exciting and rewarding challenge but it is a significant financial, and often an emotional commitment and can be a complex process with a large number of considerations. It is, therefore, recommended that you carry out detailed research and seek the expertise of the necessary professionals before embarking on, and throughout the course of such a project. You must be clear on your housing requirements and your budget together with the areas on which you are willing to compromise.

All planning applications are assessed against the detailed policies contained in the Council's Local Development Plan, which you should refer to alongside this document. Further information, and details of how to obtain site specific advice, is available from the [Planning Service](#).



The early stages – Finding a site suitable for development

Having decided that you want to pursue a small scale housing project you must find a site and / or a building suitable for your development. Factors to consider are:

- **Location**
- **New Build, Conversion or Renovation Project**
- **Site characteristics and constraints**
- **Infrastructure and Services**

Location

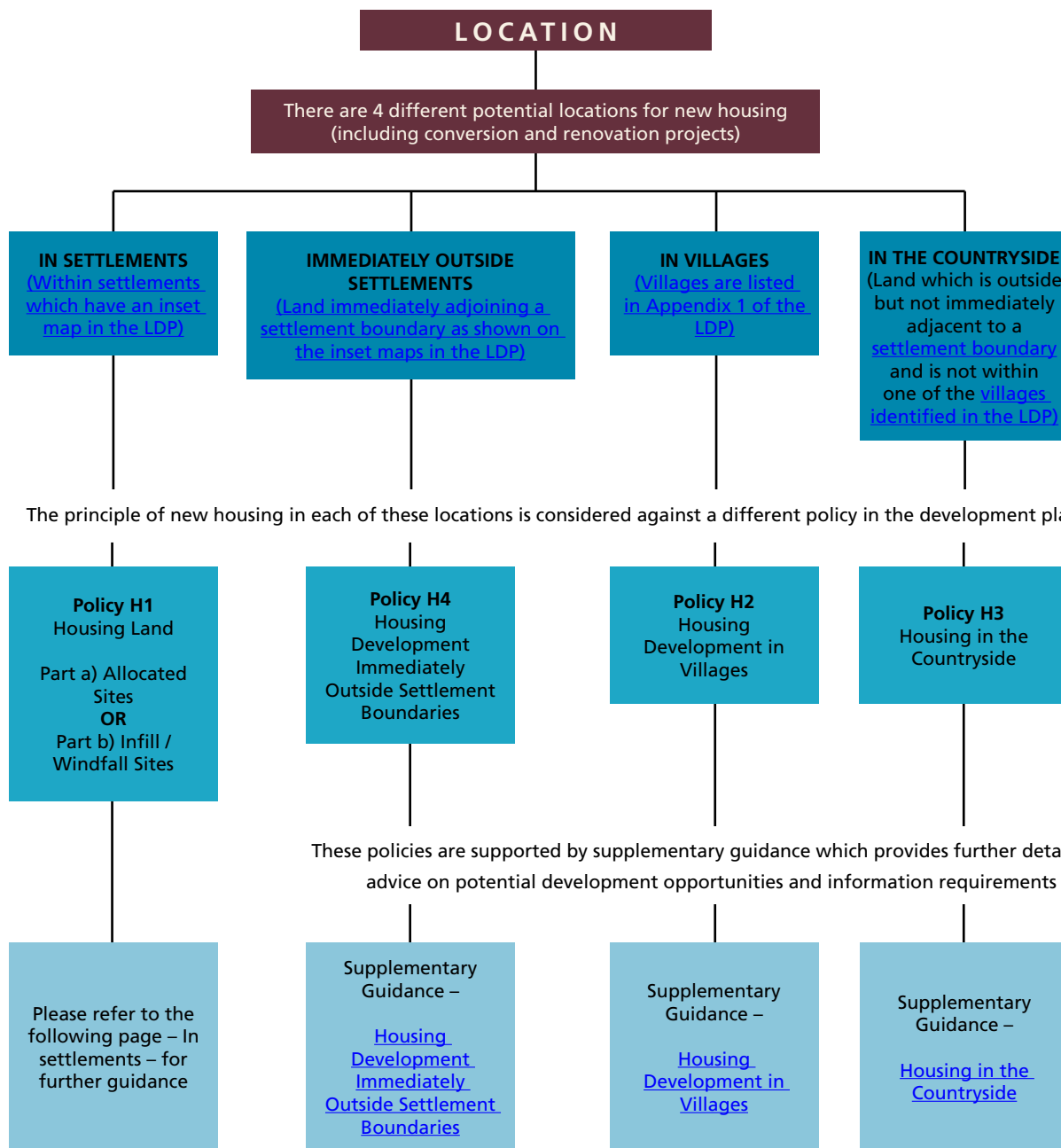
When choosing a site and / or a building you should consult the Council's Local Development Plan to determine whether there is potential to develop in your desired location.

Within Dumfries and Galloway there are 4 different types of potential location for new housing:

- **In settlements**
- **Immediately outside settlements**
- **In villages**
- **In the countryside**

The principle of new housing in each of these locations is considered against a different policy in the development plan and each has its own supplementary guidance.

The following flow chart (on page 6) identifies the relevant development plan policy and associated guidance in each instance:



All new housing proposals will require to be considered against 3 overarching policies and, where available, associated supplementary guidance:

- OP1 - Development Considerations
- OP2 - Design Quality of New Development & associated supplementary guidance
- OP3 - Developer Contributions & associated supplementary guidance

The issues covered by these policies are explained in more detail in the following pages.

The Local Development Plan (LDP) policies and supplementary guidance can be viewed on the Council's website:

www.dumgal.gov.uk/LDP

In settlements

Within settlement boundaries there is land allocated for housing together with opportunities for housing on sites not allocated for this purpose i.e. infill and brownfield sites. However, inclusion within a settlement boundary does not necessarily mean that land is suitable for development.

- **Allocated housing sites** are often large areas of land with an allocated number of houses of 5 or more and an allocated development timescale. Many of these sites require a masterplan to be completed, submitted to and agreed by the Council before any development would be permitted. In general, incremental development of an allocated site will not be permitted where there is no overall masterplan. Consequently, such sites are only generally suitable for small scale development where there is an agreed masterplan or planning permission for the whole site which will generally include an agreed phasing of development and / or site layout.
- **Infill sites** are small sites which are not formally allocated for development. They are generally located between existing development or are contained by a settlement and / or an established boundary where they would "round off" development. Infill sites are generally, capable of accommodating 1 or 2 dwellings and, therefore, can be good opportunities for small scale development.
- **Windfall sites** are those which have come forward unexpectedly and have not been specifically identified for housing in the development plan. These are often small (1-4 units), previously developed (brownfield) sites and can be good opportunities for small scale development.
- **Brownfield sites** are those which have been previously developed and include land, buildings and the curtilage of buildings. It is most commonly associated with derelict and redundant buildings. Brownfield sites can be of varying sizes. Those smaller sites can provide good opportunities for small scale development including conversion and renovation projects. However, beware of potential land contamination as a result of previous uses.
- **Sites allocated or safeguarded for other uses** including business and industrial uses and open space etc. There is a presumption against the development of such areas for alternative purposes unless certain criteria set out in the development plan are met. Such sites are generally not suitable for small scale development.

New Build, Conversion or Renovation Project?

Small scale residential development can include new build development as well as the conversion and / or renovation of existing buildings. Each has their potential benefits and constraints.

New build

A new build house can offer flexibility in design, layout and materials and can be more energy efficient on the basis that you are not constrained by the form and layout of an existing building. You have the opportunity to develop a home which suits you in terms of design, budget and lifestyle.

Conversion and renovation projects

The conversion of an existing building, or buildings to a dwelling, a number of dwellings or flats and renovation projects which bring derelict dwellings back into use can represent beneficial redevelopment and provide a sustainable new use for redundant or derelict buildings, providing the works are undertaken in a sympathetic manner. People are often attracted to conversion or renovation projects as a result of the character and distinctiveness of the existing building which offer the potential for a unique development.

Planning permission is always required for the change of use of a building to a dwelling, dwellings or flats and for all alterations and extensions proposed.

In relation to renovation projects, where the dwelling is derelict planning permission is required to bring the dwelling back into use and for any alterations and extensions proposed. However, where the dwelling remains habitable (suitable to be lived in) and simply requires modernisation planning permission would not be required. In all cases you should check with the Planning service to establish whether planning permission is required.

In countryside locations (outwith settlements and villages), only the conversion or renovation of traditional buildings – those of traditional construction built before 1919, can be supported since their retention and reuse can make a positive contribution to the countryside and preserve the areas heritage of traditional buildings. Please refer to **LDP Policy H3 – Housing in the Countryside** and the [associated supplementary guidance](#) together with the supplementary guidance on the [Conversion of Traditional Agricultural Properties](#) for further advice.

Site Characteristics and Constraints

Once you have identified a potential site you should consider the site characteristics and constraints.

The key principle behind the design process is to ensure that sites are fully assessed and understood before any detailed design solutions are considered. The best developments are the result of careful consideration and appreciation of the site and its wider context.

On site the factors to consider include:

- Size, shape and location of site – is the site located and of suitable size and shape to allow for development which will reflect the established character, form and layout of development?
- Topography – Do the existing site levels lend themselves to development and what implications will they have for the layout and design of your development?
- Neighbouring development – Will your development be compatible with surrounding uses? Are there any factors which could result in land use conflict i.e. noise, odour, smoke, fumes etc? Would your development result in loss of privacy, sunlight or daylight to neighbouring properties?
- Infrastructure
 - Access – can the site be accessed in safety and adequate parking and turning be provided?
 - Drainage – are the ground conditions suitable for development and can an acceptable means of foul and surface water drainage be provided?
 - Contamination – could the ground be contaminated as a result of previous uses?
 - Unstable land – is the site within a coal mining area where there may be old mine entries or shallow coal mine workings etc. leading to potential for collapse, instability or dangerous mine gases and water?
 - Flooding – does the site flood, have the potential to flood (even if it has not flooded before) or would the development increase the risk of, or cause flooding elsewhere?
- Natural Environment
 - Designated landscapes (i.e. National & Regional Scenic Areas & sites of national and international importance for biodiversity and geodiversity) – does the site lie within such an area where development potential may be restricted or where higher standards of design may be sought?
 - Protected species – is the site a potential habitat for any protected species? What implications does this have for your development?
 - Trees – are there trees on or overhanging the site which would have implications for the development through the requirement for their retention and protection?
 - Coastal and riverside locations – does the site lie within an area where development potential may be restricted or is there a risk of erosion, flooding or an adverse impact on water quality?

- Historic Environment
 - Archaeology – is the site within an area where development might uncover finds of archaeological interest?
 - Conservation areas – is the site located within a conservation area where a higher standard of design and palette of materials may be required?
 - Listed buildings & Scheduled Ancient Monuments – does the site contain or lie next to a listed building or Scheduled Ancient Monument which might restrict development potential, require a higher standard of design and palette of materials or require additional consents?
 - Gardens and Designed Landscapes – does the site lie within an Inventory or Non-Inventory Garden or Designed Landscape which might restrict development potential and / or require a higher standard of design and palette of materials?

Off site the following should also be considered:

- Environmental impact – i.e. landscape, ecology, flooding, drainage and water quality
- Infrastructure constraints – i.e. local road network, water supply and sewer capacity
- Community facilities & services – i.e. public open space, community and health facilities and education

The Council has produced [supplementary guidance](#) relating to a number of these topics. If your site is, or may be affected by any of the above considerations please make reference to the relevant guidance in preparing your application as it will set out the relevant considerations and requirements. The Planning Service must be satisfied that your development proposals accord with the Council's Development Plan Policies and supplementary guidance.



Surveys which can be required are:

- Flood Risk Assessment
- Contaminated Land Assessment and Remediation Strategy
- Noise Assessment & Mitigation Plan
- Drainage Impact Assessment
- Protected Species Survey & Mitigation Plan
- Tree Survey & Tree Protection Plan
- Archaeological Investigation
- Desk Based Coal Mining Risk Assessment
- Structural Survey (For conversion & renovation projects)

Where required, surveys together with a mitigation plan, where necessary, should be submitted together with your planning application. If the required survey is not submitted with the planning application a request will be made and a limited timescale provided for its submission.

The Planning Service will only request further information in the form of surveys etc. where it is necessary to properly assess the application. Further information would not be requested in cases where there is a reason why the application cannot otherwise be supported.

In some instances the above surveys can be costly. You may, therefore, wish to clarify with the Planning Service exactly the type and level of information that is required before approaching a suitably qualified professional for a quote for the work. It may also be worth getting a few quotes to achieve the best price.

Physical constraints may result in the site not being suitable for development or the costs associated in addressing the constraints (surveys & mitigation) may result in the development being unviable.

Off site costs can include developer contributions. These are generally financial contributions towards the likes of education, water or road infrastructure improvements, open space or affordable housing. Contributions towards infrastructure improvements can apply to developments of one or more dwellings, as can contributions towards education provision where the development, as a whole, comprises 3 or more dwellings. However, contributions towards open space and affordable housing currently only apply where the area of land forms part of a development comprising 5 or more dwellings or forming part of larger site allocated for, or capable of accommodating 5 or more dwellings.

Developer contributions can amount to a considerable sum and have the potential to adversely impact on the viability of a development. Reference should be made to **LDP Policy OP3 – Developer Contributions** and also to **Policies H5 – Affordable Housing** and **CF3 – Open Space** together with the associated supplementary guidance.

It pays to do your research before committing to buy a site and can prevent unexpected costs later down the line. The price you offer for a site may also need to reflect the costs associated with addressing site constraints and in meeting developer contribution requirements.

Useful links and contacts can be found in the Appendix. There is also a section on the Council's website which identifies some of the above [planning constraints](#) and provides useful links to further information.

Infrastructure and Services

When assessing the suitability of a site consideration will require to be given to the ease of servicing the site together with the associated costs unless the site is already fully 'serviced'.

Access

Developments will require to be served by a vehicular access which allows for safe access and egress from the site.

Access may be taken directly from an existing road to each individual plot or a shared access may be required. Where a shared access is required:

- Developments of up to 2 houses would be served by a private / unadopted access road
- Developments of more than 2 houses normally require to be served by an access road constructed to adoptable standards

Considerations relate to:

- Visibility from the access – Satisfactory visibility of approaching vehicles and pedestrians
- Forward visibility – Satisfactory visibility for vehicles approaching on the public road
- Geometry – Access width, radii, gradient
- Surfacing
- Drainage
- Footways including provision along the site frontage or creation of a dropped kerb footway crossing

Car parking & turning

- A dwellinghouse generally requires to be served by a minimum of 2 off-street car parking spaces (3 spaces for a dwelling of 4 bedrooms or more) together with a turning area to ensure access and egress from the site in forward gear.
- A garage can be considered as a parking space if it meets the minimum internal dimensions of 3 metres wide by 7 metres long.

The National Roads Development Guide provides greater detail on road and street design and construction (including Road Construction Consent and road adoption) and access and parking requirements.

Drainage

- **Waste water drainage** – In terms of foul drainage (waste water) there are two possible options:
 - **Connection to the public sewer** – Development within an area where there is a public sewer must be connected to the public system. This includes village septic tanks. Provision of a private sewage system in these areas will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances i.e. where this is insufficient capacity at the waste water treatment works to serve the development, and where a number of criteria, as set out under **Policy IN9**, are met.
 - **Provision of a private sewage system** – Where there is no public sewer a private drainage system may be acceptable subject to the criteria set out under **Policy IN9** being met.

Where the wastewater from a development is to be treated via a private sewage system and discharged to a soakaway, partial soakaway or direct to controlled waters, the developer is required under the Water Environment (Controlled Activities)(Scotland) Regulations 2011 to [register such discharges with SEPA.](#)

- **Surface water drainage** – With the exception of single dwellinghouses and those with direct discharge to coastal waters, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) will be a required part of all residential development proposals as a means of treating surface water as detailed under **Policy IN8**

For any site a Drainage Impact Assessment may be required.

Water supply - In terms of water supply there are two possible options:

- [Connection to the public water supply](#) – This is the most common means of providing a water supply.
- [Provision of a private water supply](#) – In limited circumstances a private water supply may be proposed.

If a private water supply is proposed the Council's Environmental Standards service requires to be satisfied that the supply meets legal standards in terms of quality and quantity. Private water supplies also require to be registered with the Council's Environmental Standards service.

Electricity and Heat - The means of providing electricity and heat should also be considered. Electricity and gas may be delivered through the mains supply, where available. However, in rural locations an alternative means of heating i.e. LPG or oil may be required. Tanks should always be sited in a safe and discreet but accessible location. Alternatively, you may wish to consider using renewable technologies where the site conditions allow.

Telecommunications – Staying connected is also an important consideration for both social / recreational and business use. You will need to explore the possibility of and costs associated with installing, or achieving a suitable connection or coverage.

In all instances early contact should be made with the relevant utility companies and regulating bodies to ensure that the necessary connections can be made, the relevant standards achieved and the costs can be met.

Practical difficulties in servicing a site or the costs associated may result in development being unviable and, therefore, should be fully explored before you commit to buying a site.



Accommodating or relocating existing services and utilities - In, on, over, under or adjacent to the land which you wish to develop there may be existing services and / or utilities i.e. underground or overhead electrical apparatus, water and sewerage services, gas pipelines, street lighting or other street furniture, which will require to be accommodated or relocated as part of the development. For example it may be necessary to remove, or relocate, a telegraph pole or street light to achieve suitable visibility from a vehicular access. The wayleave restrictions and practical and cost implications will require to be carefully considered and have the potential to render a site undevelopable or unviable.

It is recommended that you contact the relevant utility companies or roads authority to establish the geographical location of such services and utilities, the ability to accommodate or relocate the apparatus, the implications of such works for your development and the extent of any wayleave or deed of servitude which exists to provide the utility company with permanent rights of access to install, operate and maintain their apparatus.



Is the site right for me?

Having fully considered the site characteristics and its constraints and established that it has the potential to be developed you must then investigate whether it is suitable for your proposed development in terms of all the permissions which you will need to obtain including planning permission, building warrant, Road Opening Permit etc. and also in terms of financial viability.

It is a good idea to have a checklist when evaluating the suitability of a piece of land. Factors to consider could include:-

- **Planning history & development proposals** - It is extremely important to check the planning history and land allocations in the development plan for the area of land which you wish to develop and the adjoining land. A search of the planning history for a site and adjoining land will show whether there has been any previous planning applications, the types of development any applications proposed and if they were approved or refused.

The search of the planning history and land allocations will help inform whether there is potential that you would gain planning permission for the development you propose and also whether there is potential for adjoining land to be developed and for what purpose i.e. if you wish to develop a site because it has extensive views across open fields you would want to know if there is potential that those fields may be developed.

You can undertake your own [planning history search](#) on the Council's ePlanning website or you, or your solicitor, can apply for a Property Enquiry Certificate for a fee. A Property Enquiry Certificate is a standard report on information regarding Statutory Notices and other legal orders, designations and regulations that affect a property.

Where the site lies within a settlement land allocations for the site and surrounding land can be viewed in the Council's [Local Development Plan](#).

- **Scale & design** - Before committing to purchasing a plot of land you should take in to account the site constraints and policy requirements to establish whether the area of land can physically accommodate a house(s) of the scale and design that meets your needs and wishes and whether this would be supported by the relevant development plan policies e.g. while a plot might physically be able to accommodate a large, two storey dwellinghouse this might result in insufficient parking and/or garden area and may result in overlooking and overshadowing of neighbouring properties and, therefore, would fail to comply with the relevant development plan policies. Similarly a large two storey dwellinghouse would be out of character in an area where houses are modest, single storey properties. Please refer to the supplementary guidance on [Design Quality of New Development](#) for further detail. Unfortunately, it is not always possible to develop a site in the manner you may wish. If this is the case you must decide whether you are willing to compromise or if this is just not the right site for you.

- **Viability of development** – A site is viable if the value generated by its development exceeds the costs of developing it and also provides sufficient incentive for the land to come forward and the development to be undertaken. For people wishing to build their own homes any viability assessment should take account of average plot values and build costs for such development. The build route proposed (e.g whether it is contractor-led or a DIY project) and any non-construction costs related to the project such as project management and professional fees should also be considered. Please refer to the Scottish Government document '[A Guide to Development Viability](#)' for more information.
- **Affordability** – Taking into account all of the costs of the development can you afford to develop the site? You need to be clear what you can afford to pay, and what you are willing to pay, for a site taking into account the full development costs. You will need to establish how much you can pay from existing capital and what you will need to borrow to finance the project. You will need to contact possible lenders early in the process to find out whether it will be possible to borrow the amount of money you require, the borrowing and repayment terms and at what stages of the development money can be accessed. In most cases you will require to provide a significant deposit to fund the build. This will help you to identify early on whether your budget is likely to be enough to proceed with the development and whether you will have sufficient cash flow to manage the project, or whether you need to consider compromising on certain aspects, such as size, design, location or whether there is any of the building work you can do yourself.



Buying a site

Serviced vs Unserviced site – The pros and cons of buying a serviced or unserviced site should be considered. With a serviced site the difficulties of achieving the necessary connections will already have been overcome although the associated costs will be reflected in the asking price for the site.

Site survey / appraisal – A site survey / appraisal of the plot of land is recommended to check how suitable it is for building on and if there are any problems.

For example, this appraisal can check:

- For contamination due to past uses;
- Any minerals-related problems i.e. due to old mineral workings under the site;
- That ground conditions are suitable for development;
- That there is not a significant risk of flooding;
- That the essential services (electricity, water and drainage etc) are or can be made available at the site.

A site with or without planning permission – Before you buy any plot, you should check whether it already has any form of planning permission or if it has previously had planning permission granted or refused.

- If a site has **full planning permission**, this means that you would be required to develop the site in full accordance with that planning permission including all drawings and any conditions of that planning permission.

If you wish to develop the site in a way which is different to the existing planning permission (except for minor details) you will need to make a new planning application. Before committing to buying a site you should establish whether any potential changes to the proposals could be supported.

- If the plot has **planning permission in principle**, this means that the principle of the development has been accepted. A further application would be required to agree the specific details of the proposed development. You may wish to establish whether or not you would be likely to get planning permission on the site for the type of house(s) you would like to build and you should find out about any particular site constraints or planning policy requirements together with the requirements of any conditions attached to the planning permission in principle.

- If an area of land does not have planning permission for the type of development which you propose, the asking price may be cheaper but gaining planning permission may not be guaranteed. In these instances it is essential that you investigate the acceptability of the proposed development before committing to buying an area of land. If you wish to buy land which does not have any form of planning permission, the land owner may agree to an offer which is subject to you securing the appropriate planning permission. This allows you to pull out of the sale if your planning application is refused so is a sensible option.

Legal advice - You should always seek independent legal advice before making an offer for a plot of land. Your solicitor should be able to advise on the following matters:

- Rights of access
- Servitude rights
- Property Enquiry
- Check all relevant permissions, consents etc granted
- Check for any unauthorised works and enforcement action

Financial advice – Building a house, houses or undertaking a conversion or renovation can be one of the biggest financial commitments you will ever make. It is, therefore, essential that you seek financial advice at an early stage to ensure that you can afford to buy and develop the site through the use of existing capital, borrowed finance or a combination of the two. A good financial adviser will help you establish what financial products are available to you and if you can secure the necessary finance. If you need to borrow money to finance the project it is recommended that you have a mortgage or loan offer, or are sure you can secure the money, before you commit to buying a plot of land.



Choosing the right professionals

For any development, you should get professional advice to help with the design, technical, project management, financial and legal aspects.

Unless you have the appropriate skills you will require appropriately qualified individuals or companies to advise you and to prepare the drawings and technical details required as part of a planning application and any other permissions, consents, licences, permits etc. you may require.

Benefits of professional advice

The Planning Service aims to be transparent and straightforward, but the planning process can be somewhat daunting and complex to those who are not familiar with it. It is, therefore, always recommended that appropriately qualified and experienced professionals are employed to advise on your development proposals. Every site is different with its own characteristics, constraints and opportunities and, therefore, each site must be considered individually. In most instances there are particular factors which draw you to a site i.e. the views, the landscape setting, the size or location and in all cases the development requires to be designed for the particular site. A qualified architect can maximise the potential of a site and make it and the house, or houses, work for you on an aspirational level as well as a practical and financial level by interpreting your development needs and wants. They can make the most of the opportunities of the site and overcome constraints in an imaginative and innovative way.

Professionals also often offer a project management service which co-ordinates the whole project including submission and management of all necessary permissions, co-ordinating contractors, managing timescales and budgets and supervising the quality of work.

While it can seem like a lot of money to pay for professional services it is well worth the investment and often prevents delays, overspend and unexpected problems during the development.

Which professionals do I need?

The nature and complexity of the project including the constraints and sensitivity of the site will determine the type and number of professional services you will need to engage.

There are many different types of service offered as part of the development process. Below are a few of the professional services:

An **Architect** – Specialises in the design of buildings and project management of construction projects. The relevant professional body is either the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland (RIAS) or the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). A member is known as a Chartered Architect.

An **Architectural Technician** - Provides technical building design and project management services and can be trained in architectural technology, building technical design and construction. Chartered Architectural Technicians are members of the Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists (CIAT).

A **Planning Consultant** – Provides a service focussed on providing advice on planning issues i.e. the planning process and planning policy. Chartered Town Planners are members of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).

A **Surveyor** – Chartered Surveyors are members of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). There are a number of different types of surveyor which could be involved at various stages of your building project including Building Standards, Building, Property Management, Quantity and Land and Property Surveyors:-

Building Standards Surveyors are involved with the design and construction of new and altered buildings and cover all aspects of building regulations and legislation.

Building Surveyors are involved in all aspects of property and construction responsible for building, supervision or restoration.

Project Management Surveyors play a central role in communicating with all professionals on a project to maximise efficiencies and drive towards successful completion.

Quantity Surveyors can provide feasibility and cost planning advice together with a financial management service to ensure a project is on track and within budget.

Land and Property Surveyors can be involved in land and property valuation, surveying and sales.

Choosing professionals

Whether an individual or company, professionals have had extensive specialist training and achieved a formal qualification, usually a degree. If they are also a member of their relevant professional body this demonstrates that the individual or company achieves and adheres to the high professional standards of competence and conduct as set out by the relevant professional body.

While individuals or companies may have formal qualifications and membership of a professional body this is not always the case and it is not an industry requirement. Before employing an individual or company you can check what qualifications and professional memberships they have. It is also useful to confirm fees, as these can vary considerably, and to look at examples of their previous projects to see the type and quality of work they have produced and whether their design style suits your requirements.

To find a suitable professional, you can search on the websites of the relevant professional bodies or look on the internet and in telephone directories for individuals or companies which are qualified and experienced in the required type of work. It is also worth asking friends or relatives as they may have recommendations. You may also wish to talk to several individuals or companies before appointing one to make sure you find an individual or company you are happy with.



Site Layout & House Design

Building your own home provides a good opportunity to meet your needs and aspirations. However, there are a number of factors which may restrict what you can do including planning restrictions, building regulations and your budget.

In terms of the planning considerations, all development proposals should achieve a high quality of design, contributing positively to the existing built and natural environment, to a sense of place and local distinctiveness. Key design principles and a simple and logical design process which should be followed are set out in the supplementary guidance on [Design Quality of New Development](#)

Key design principles:

- i) Proposals should create places that respect the landscape character, including topography, and visual qualities of the site and surrounding area, retaining and, where appropriate, enhancing existing landscape features.
- ii) Proposals should relate to and respect the form, scale, massing and pattern, of surrounding built forms.
- iii) Building materials and colours should be chosen for their high quality, to complement the site context and to strengthen the local distinctiveness of the area.
- iv) Proposals that form a new long term settlement edge should create a positive relationship with the adjoining countryside, providing an appropriate transition between the built up area and the adjoining countryside.
- v) Proposals should have adequate storage areas for refuse and recycling containers, either per unit or communally, designed and sited so as not to detract from the appearance of the development and to allow bins to be safely and conveniently taken to a collection point.

The layout and design should be developed to meet the requirements of the development principles, planning policies and guidance and be tailored to meet the specific context of the site. All sites are different and require different solutions.

Types of application & the planning process

If there is not already detailed planning permission for your proposed development, you will need to secure this before you can start building.

Planning permission in principle & Approval of matters specified in conditions - To find out if the principle of residential development is acceptable on a particular area of land you can apply for planning permission in principle. Detailed plans are not usually required at this stage. Planning permission in principle usually lasts for three years from the date that it is granted.

If approved, an application for planning permission in principle must be followed by an application for the approval of matters specified in conditions and must be submitted to the planning authority within that three year period. Such an application relates to conditions attached to the planning permission in principle where the further approval, consent or agreement of the planning authority is required. All of the matters set out in the conditions attached to the planning permission in principle require to be addressed through a formal application before works can commence. Development must be commenced not later than two years from the final approval of matters specified in conditions.

Full planning permission - An application for full planning permission requires to include all of the details of a proposal i.e. site layout including position of house within the site, access, parking and turning, garden areas, boundary treatments and other hard and soft landscaping, foul and surface water drainage, existing and proposed site levels and finished floor levels; details of the proposed dwelling including elevations, cross sections, floor plans and external materials.

Full planning permission must be applied for if the application involves the change of use of an existing building.

Full planning permission usually lasts for three years from the date that it is granted. If you don't start work within that time then the permission will expire.

Timescales – The target for making a decision on a planning application for small scale residential development is within two months of receiving a valid application. However, decision timescales are currently an average of 13 weeks. A planning officer usually makes a decision on your application but in some cases it may be up to a council committee and this can often result in a decision taking longer. The [Scheme of Delegation](#) sets out the circumstances where a committee decision would be required.

Costs – There will be a fee for submitting a planning application. The fee varies depending on the scale and nature of the proposed development. The [Scottish Government's online fee calculator](#) can assist in working out the cost of your planning application.

In addition to the planning application fee, an advert may require to be placed in the local newspaper. The cost of this is borne by the applicant. The advert costs for the different newspapers vary but range from £25 to £80.

Customer service - What to expect - The [Development Management Service Customer Charter and Guidance Note](#) set out the core visions. They explain the services we offer, the standards we adhere to, our measurable performance targets, and give guidance on what level of service you can expect to receive as an applicant, agent or third party.

Planning Application forms

Planning application forms can be completed and submitted via the Scottish Government's ePlanning portal: www.eplanning.scot

Alternatively, planning application forms together with detailed guidance on how to apply can be [downloaded](#) from the Scottish Government's ePlanning portal and submitted electronically or in hard copy to the Council's Planning Service.



Planning Advice

General planning advice

If having accessed the range of guidance available on the Council's website you have been unable to find an answer to your planning question the duty planning officer can provide general advice on the planning system and processes (such as how to complete a form, what needs planning permission, how to read a drawing etc).

The duty officer is not able to provide detailed or site-specific advice on the acceptability of a proposal.

A duty planning officer is available on the telephone Monday to Friday between 10am and 1pm only. A counter service is available at the following offices:

Kirkbank House, Dumfries – Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday between 10am and 1pm only

Ashwood House, Stranraer – Thursday between 10am and 1pm only

Pre-application enquiries

We can provide detailed advice on the suitability of a proposal before an application is submitted. This is a useful if you have specific queries or a more complex case.

If having accessed the range of guidance available on the Council's website, and potentially having sought the advice of an agent, you feel that you still require further guidance you have the option of submitting a pre-application enquiry. However, please note a charge has been introduced for this service.

[Pre-application enquiry forms](#) can be downloaded from the Council's website.

Other Permissions, consents, licences you may need

In addition to planning permission you may require the following:

A **building warrant** – You will also need to apply for a building warrant before you can start building work. A building warrant is required to ensure that the development meets current building regulations. Your architect or other design professional will be able to help you prepare a building warrant application including the necessary drawings.

Contact [Dumfries and Galloway Council Building Standards](#) for more information.

Grant of a connection for water, waste water, electricity, gas, telecomms etc and Permission to remove or relocate utilities apparatus.

Contact should be made with the relevant utility companies.

Consent to Discharge / CAR licence for septic tanks or other private sewage treatment plants

Contact SEPA

A **Road Opening Permit** is required for the formation of a new, or alterations to an existing, access or other works within the public road boundary i.e. formation of a dropped kerb access or installation of services.

or

Road Construction Consent is required for the construction of a new road or an extension of an existing road, irrespective of whether or not the road is intended to be adopted as a public road.

Contact Dumfries and Galloway Council DG First.

A **European Protected Species licence** is required to carry out development in relation to a protected species that might otherwise be against the law.

Contact Scottish Natural Heritage.

Useful links and contacts

Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/ldp>

Dumfries and Galloway Council Supplementary Guidance

- [Housing in the Countryside](#)
- [Housing Development in Villages](#)
- [Housing Development Immediately Outside Settlement Boundaries](#)
- [Design Quality of New Development](#)
- [Developer Contributions](#)
- [Conversion of Traditional Agricultural Buildings](#)
- [Historic Built Environment](#)
- There are Conservation Area Character Appraisals for:
 - [Dumfries](#)
 - [Stranraer](#)
 - [Whithorn](#)
 - [Kirkcudbright](#)
 - [Gatehouse](#)
 - [Annan](#)
 - [Crichton](#)
- [Flooding and Development](#)
- [Surface Water and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems](#)
- [Trees and Development](#)
- [An Introduction to Land Contamination and Development Management](#)
- [Protection of Water Margins](#)

Council Contacts

Landscape Architect - Planning & Environment, Militia House, Dumfries, DG1 2HR
Tel. 01387 260169.

Roads (DGFirst) - Cargen Tower, Garroch Business Park, Garroch Loaning, Dumfries. DG2 8PN.
Tel: 01387 271100

Conservation Officer - Planning & Environment, Militia House, Dumfries, DG1 2HR
Tel. 01387 260160

Archaeologist - Planning & Environment, Militia House, Dumfries, DG1 2HR
Tel. 01387 260154

Contaminated Land Officer – Planning & Environment, Militia House, Dumfries, DG1 2HR
Tel. 01387 260374

Flood Risk Management Team - Planning & Environment, Militia House, Dumfries, DG1 2HR
Tel. 01387 260303

Environmental Standards – Municipal Chambers, Buccleuch Street, Dumfries, DG1 2AD.
Tel: 01387 245990

Other contacts

SNH: <http://www.snh.gov.uk/> email: southern_scotland@snh.gov.uk

Dumfries office: Greystone Park, 55/57 Moffat Road, Dumfries, DG1 1NP Tel: 0300 067 3200

Newton Stewart Office: Holmpark Industrial Estate, New Galloway Road, Newton Stewart, Wigtownshire, DG8 6BF Tel: 01671 404700

SEPA: <http://www.sepa.org.uk/>

Customer enquiries Tel: 03000 996699

Historic Environment Scotland: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/>

General enquiries Tel: 0131 668 8600

Transport Scotland: <http://www.transport.gov.scot/>

Scottish Water: <http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/>

Scottish Water Property Searches, Bullion House, Invergowrie, Dundee DD2 5BB

<http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/business/horizons/asset-plans/asset-plans>

Scottish Power, Power Systems, Data Management (Correspondence), St Vincent Crescent, Glasgow G3 8LT

Tel: 0141 567 4152/4155/4455 Fax: 0141 567 4262)

Scottish Gas Networks, 95 Kilbirnie Street, Tradeston, Glasgow G5 8JD

Tel: 0141 418 4145

Coal Authority: www.gov.uk/coalauthority