



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
Cayman Islands Government

# Development Application Process



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# DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION PROCESS

## LEGISLATION

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1. Development and Planning Law (2017 Revision)
2. Development and Planning Regulations (2018 Revision)
3. 2009 International Building Code
4. 2009 International Residential Code
5. Building Code (Amendment) Regulations (2016)
6. Electricity Law (2008 Revision)

## OUR HISTORY, OUR PROCESS, OUR PEOPLE

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### History

The 1960s was a period of rapid growth for the Cayman Islands with the development of the financial services and tourism industry, and its accompanying construction boom. In 1968, the government, on the advice of the United Nations, decided to set up an improved system of development control.

The purpose of this new department would be to effectively control development, but also to take positive steps to plan for future growth.

In early 1970 a qualified Architect Planner was recruited and in 1971 the Department of Planning was fully functional.

At the time of its opening the department was staffed by four people:

- W.H. Hamilton – Architect Planner
- N.R. Miller – Building Inspector
- Carl Farrell – Draughtsman
- Norma Peart – Secretary

The small department was charged with responsibility of processing planning application and informing the public of various rules and regulations related to land use and construction. Prior to the 1960s the construction industry was governed by a regional planning law, however it was considered antiquated and inadequate. The first effective legislation was the Land Development

(Interim Control) Law 1969 which served to produce ordered and sensible development of the Islands. In 1971, the first comprehensive legislation was passed; the Development and Planning Law 1971. Since that time the department has achieved a number of milestones including:

- 1977 – “Planning Statement for the Cayman Islands” was approved by the Legislative Assembly and deemed to be the first development plan of Cayman
- 1982 – The department begins work to develop a building code for the Cayman Islands. Mr. Thomas Moses (former president of the Southern Building Code Congress and National Building Code Council of the US) was retained to undertake the preparation.
- 1987 – The Building Control Unit is formed to administer the Cayman Islands Building Code in anticipation of its approval
- 1991 – The Builders Code is accepted as a working document and tabled in the Legislative Assembly
- 1995 – The department introduces an electronic application tracking system
- 1999 – The department restructures, and is divided into four sections: Long Range Planning, Current Planning, Building Control, Administration
- 2000 – Enforcement Officers are hired to control illegal development
- 2001 – The department launches its website
- 2011 – The department moves into the Government Administration Building
- 2018 – The department launches the online planning application system

## **Process**

The Department of Planning is charged with the responsibility of supporting the Central Planning Authority and Development Control Board in regulating all forms of physical development in the Cayman Islands. The Department is comprised of three major sections, Current Planning, Building Control and Policy Development.

### **Current Planning:**

This division of the department is your point of contact for all applications to build or erect structures and alter land. Current Planning processes applications for development and examines the suitability of a project or development proposal in accordance with the Development and Planning Laws and Regulations, and the Development Plan 1997.

### **Building Control:**

The Building Control division handles issues related to permits, inspections and final certificates. The section processes permit applications and reviews the pertinent structural, mechanical, electrical, plumbing and other drawings to determine if the construction is in compliance with building codes.

Once a permit has been issued, inspectors will make multiple trips to construction to ensure all the work taking place follows the approved plans and conforms to code. Once a development has passed final inspection the unit will grant the applicable certificate.

## Policy Development:

This division is responsible for policy preparation, special reports and recommending revisions to the Development Plan, as well as the Development and Planning Law and Regulations. The unit also provides mapping and statistical support to the Department, other government agencies and customers.

## People

The Department of Planning is staffed with 46 employees. Leading the department is Director Haroon Pandohie. Senior managers include Ron Sanderson, Deputy Director with responsibility for Current Planning, McCleary Frederick, Deputy Director with responsibility for Building Control, Kristen Augustine, Operations Senior Manager, Kerry-Ann Picard, Plans Examiner Supervisor, John Davis, Inspection Supervisor for Building Control.

## DEVELOPMENT DEFINITION

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“development” means the carrying out of building, engineering or other operations in, on, over or under any land, the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land, or the subdivision of any land, except that the following types of developments shall not require planning permission but shall be subject to all other provisions of the Law and any regulations made under the Law, including the Building Code Regulations, namely - Deposit of development plans Provisions for development

- (a) the carrying out of works for the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of any detached house if the works –
  - (i) affect only the interior of the house or do not materially affect the external appearance of the house; and
  - (ii) do not constitute or contribute to a material change in the use of the house;
- (ab) the carrying out of works for the maintenance, improvement or other alteration of any building (other than a detached house) if the works –
  - (i) affect only the interior of the building or do not materially affect the external appearance of the building;
  - (ii) do not constitute or contribute to a material change in the use of the building; and
  - (iii) do not contravene any other Law, regulation or code;
- (b) the carrying out by a highway authority of any works required for the maintenance or improvement or widening of a road;

- (c) the carrying out, with the approval of the Managing Director of the National Roads Authority by any authority or statutory undertakers of any works for the purpose of inspecting, repairing or renewing any sewers, mains, cables or other apparatus, including the breaking open of any street or other land for that purpose;
- (d) the use of any land for the purpose of agriculture (except living accommodation, grazing, dairy farming, the breeding or keeping of livestock, or the farming of turtles in confinement);
- (e) the erection or construction of gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure not being with any setback adjacent to the sea or road, not exceeding four feet in height and not constructed of sheet metal;
- (g) the display of such advertisements as may be specified by the Authority



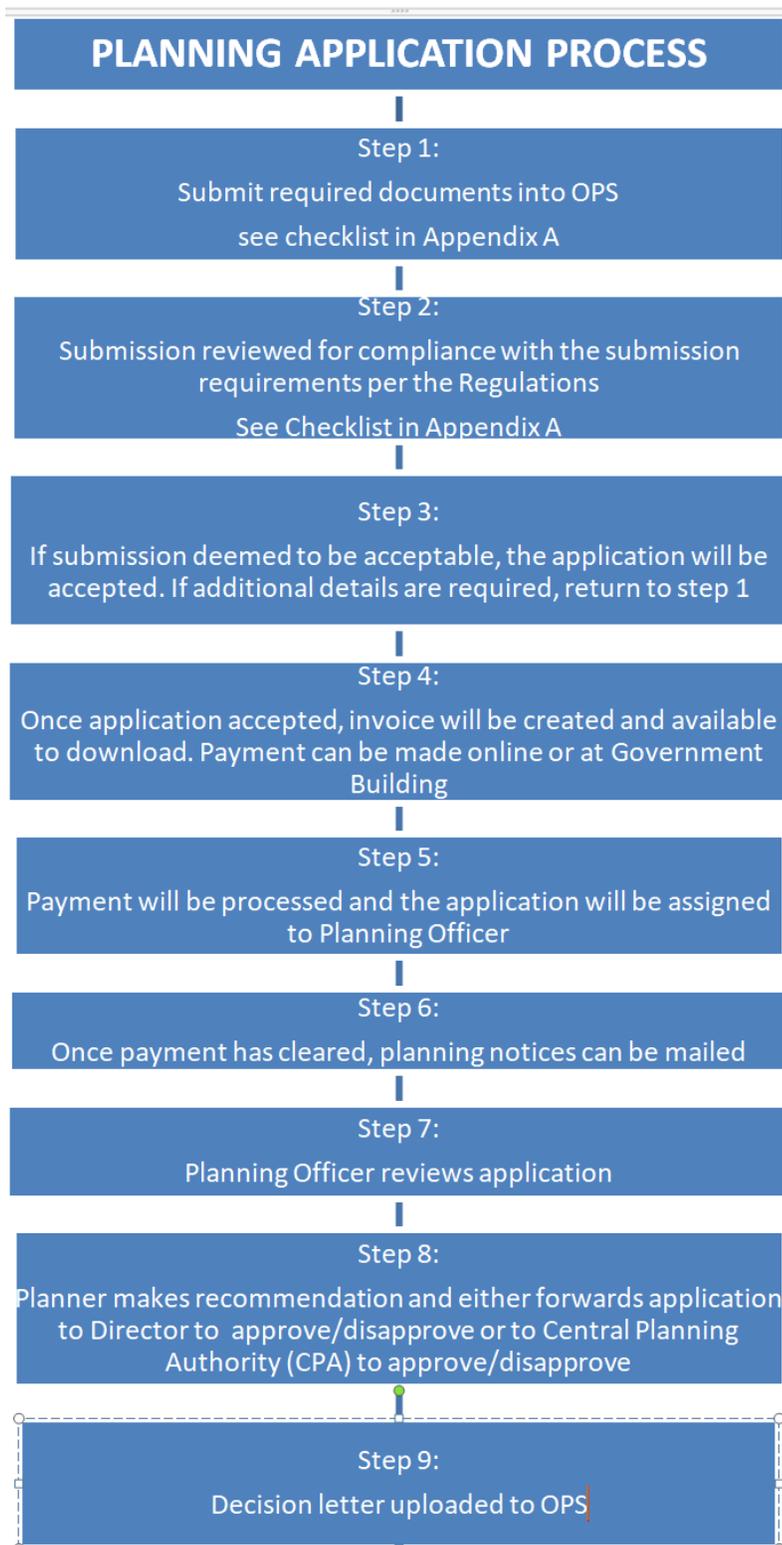
# DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION PROCESS





## PLANNING PERMISSION PROCESS

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## Planning Permission Process - FAQs

### **Q: Do I need planning permission to construct a house?**

A: Yes. Almost all development on Grand Cayman requires planning permission, including excavation, land clearing, advertising signs, pools, cabanas, sheds, houses, apartments, commercial buildings, and many more. Please contact the Department of Planning to see if your development requires planning permission.

### **Q: I need to notify neighbours regarding a development proposal. Can the Department of Planning provide me with a list of addresses?**

A: No. The Department of Planning can provide you with information on how many of your neighbours must be polled (i.e. 250 foot radius, neighbouring properties, etc.), but the Lands and Survey Department is the agency that can provide addresses.

### **Q: Do I need planning permission to construct a shed or place a shipping container on my land?**

A: Yes. All structures in the Cayman Islands require planning permission, and many also require a building permit.

### **Q: Do I need planning permission to erect a fence?**

A: It depends. All fences adjacent to the road or a high water mark require planning permission, no matter the height.

### **Q: Do I need planning permission for an LPG Tank or Generator**

A: Yes. All LPG Tanks and Generators require planning permission and a permit.

### **Q. Where can I obtain a copy of my land register?**

A. A Land Register can be purchased from the Lands and Survey Department. They are located in the Government Administration Building

**Q: How do I apply for planning permission?**

A: All applications must be submitted online via the Online Planning System. Visit [www.planning.ky/ops](http://www.planning.ky/ops) to register

**Q: Can I get advice from the Department of Planning?**

A: A Planning Officer is on duty every day from 8:30am to 4:00pm. No appointment is necessary. Just drop by and ask to speak to the Planning Officer on duty. Customers can also email [info@planning.gov.ky](mailto:info@planning.gov.ky)

**Q: Who can make a planning application?**

A: Anyone can submit a planning application. The legal landowner does not have to be the applicant. However you are advised to consult with an architect as they are familiar with the planning process and can submit the plans on your behalf.

**Q. Do I need an architect to draw my plans?**

A. Plans must adhere to the requirements set out in the Development and Planning Regulations and the Building Code. The Regulations can be found on our website, [www.planning.ky/legislation](http://www.planning.ky/legislation). The Building Code must be purchased from the International Code Council, [www.iccsafe.org](http://www.iccsafe.org).

**Q: I have submitted my planning application, now what?**

A: Your application will be logged by a Clerical Officer and then assigned to a Planning Officer to process. If the application is for a house and meets the minimum Planning Regulations, your application will be processed “Administratively”. Meaning the Director of Planning or his designate will approve the application. If your application requires notification and/or does not meet the minimum Planning Regulations, the Planning officer will seek comments from various relevant agencies, and then write a report to be presented to the Central Planning Authority.

**Q. What does forward for consideration mean?**

A. This means the planner has completed their review. Depending on the application, you may need to wait for the notification period to finish or for other agencies to comment before the application can proceed to decision making stage

**Q. I just received an email to state revisions required. What does this mean?**

A. The Planner may require revised plans or additional information. The comments will be available to read in OPS. To submit the revisions, create “an additional current planning review” in OPS

**Q. I mailed my notices, what do I do now?**

A. You must scan and upload all notification documents into OPS. Create a “Supplementary Information” plan review under your project record. All correspondence and variance letters can be uploaded as “Supplementary Information”

**Q. If I pay the planning fee, do I automatically receive planning permission?**

A. No. The Planning application fee is a charge that must be paid to the Department for consideration of a planning application. Payment of this fee does not guarantee planning permission will be granted. Application fees are statutory fees made under the Development and Planning Regulations and are set by Legislative Assembly.

**Q: How can I find out if my application meets the Planning Regulations?**

A: The Development and Planning Law (2017 Revision) and The Development and Planning Regulations (2017 Revision) are available on our website, [www.planning.ky](http://www.planning.ky).

**Q: What if someone objects to my application?**

A: If someone objects to your planning application, the objection letter will be sent to you to review. You and the objector(s) will be invited to appear before the Central Planning Authority to discuss the issues raised.

**Q. How do I check on the status of my application?**

A. Ensure your architect provides your email on the application form and then you will receive automatic email notification to show the progress of your application

**Q: I received planning permission, now what?**

A: After you receive your letter granting planning permission, you need to comply with any conditions that may have been placed on the project. Once all conditions have been met, the Planning Officer will upload the approved plans to OPS. You will need these plans to submit with your permit application. You have 5 years to submit an application for a permit. Once you receive the permit, you can start construction.

**Q. How do I appeal a planning decision?**

A. You must submit a notice of appeal along with a \$50 fee to the Ministry of Commerce, Planning and Infrastructure and provide a copy of the notice to the Department of Planning.

**Q. My planning permission is about to expire and I do not have a permit, can I extend my planning permission?**

A. Under the Development and Planning Regulations, you must obtain a permit within 5 years of the date of the decision in order for your permit to be valid. If planning permission expires, you will need to re-apply for planning permission and pay all applicable fees.

**Q. I want to make changes to my plans, what do I do?**

A. You must submit an application for a “modification to planning permission” and provide a full set of the revised plans and pay the applicable fee

**Q. I want to do an addition and renovations to my house, how do I obtain copies of my original house plan**

A. You can make a request for your plans on our website, [www.planning.ky/ops-file-request](http://www.planning.ky/ops-file-request).

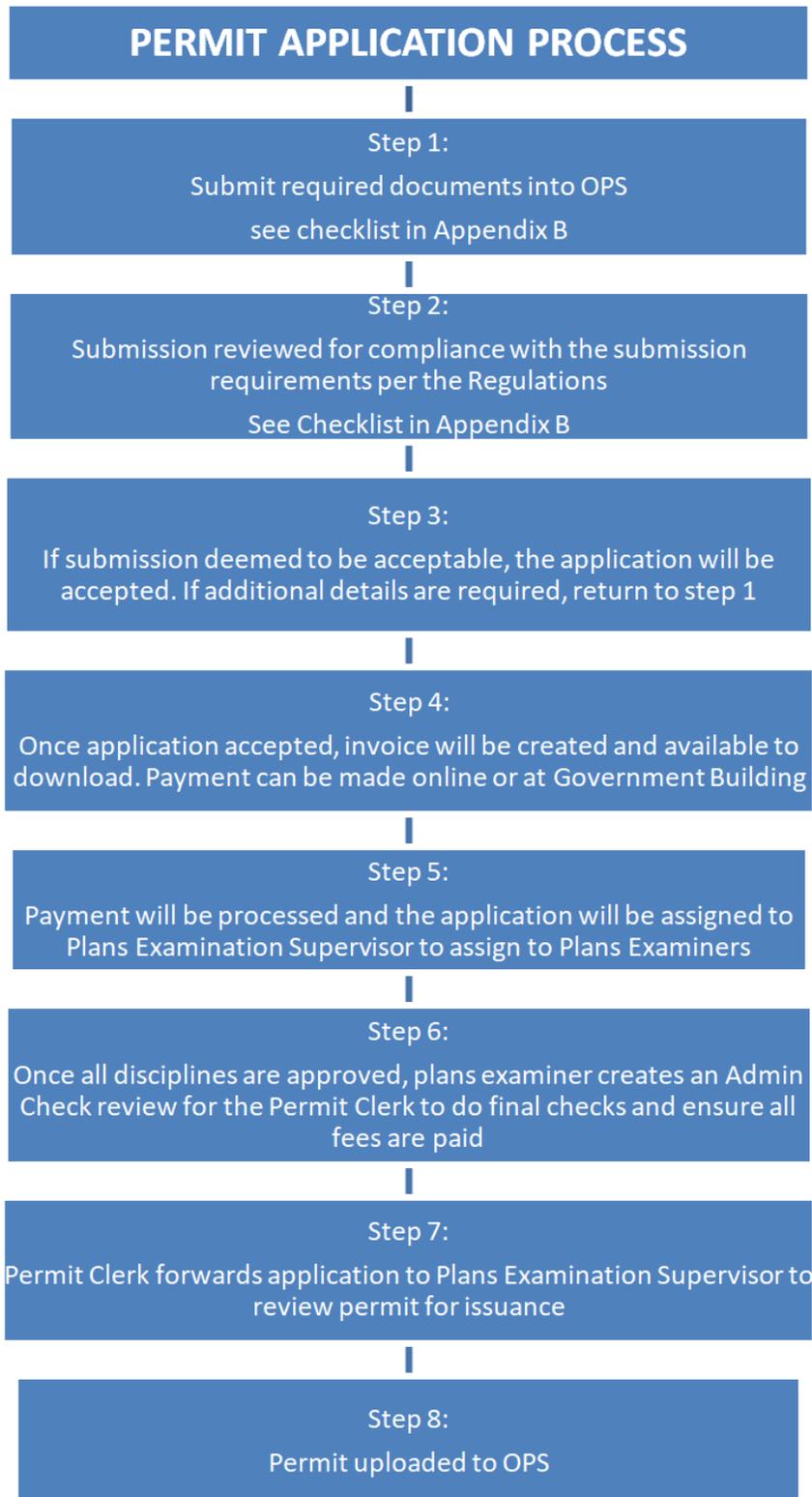
**Q. Do I need permission to subdivide my land?**

A. Planning permission is required to subdivide land. The Development and Planning Regulations lay out the minimum required lot size depending on the planning zone. You must hire a surveyor to assess your property and submit the application on your behalf. Once planning permission is granted, you must submit an application to the Lands and Survey Department to have the land official subdivided and new parcel numbers assigned.



## PERMIT APPLICATION PROCESS

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## Permit Process - FAQs

### **Q. What is a permit application?**

A. A permit application is for the review of the structural, mechanical, plumbing, electrical and gas components of your project. A plans examiner will review these details on your plan to ensure the structure will be safe and meets the applicable Building Codes.

### **Q. I received a disapproval notice regarding the permit application. What happens now?**

A. The Design Professional who submitted the application must make the necessary corrections and submit the drawings for a re-review. If the application is disapproved again, a fee must be paid when submitting the third and subsequent reviews.

### **Q. I received my permit but now I want to make changes, what do I do?**

A. You must submit the revised plans as a “Modification to Approved Plans” for the applicable discipline. If you are modifying architectural drawings, planning permission for the modification may be required.

### **Q. I have my permit but now I want to install Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG)?**

You must obtain planning permission for the LPG tank and then submit the required drawings as a “General” Review under the current permit application.

### **Q. I am ready to start construction and I need temporary electrical power?**

A. Once the permit has been issued, a certified electrician can submit an inspection request for temporary electrical power.

### **Q. Which inspections do I need for my project?**

A. Please visit our website to view the inspection flow chart or see page 17 of this document.

**Q. I received a disconnection notice but I am still building my house, what does this mean?**

A. If you received a disconnection notice it means that you have not requested an inspection within 6 months and therefore your permit is about to expire and your electrical connection will be terminated. You will need to either apply for a permit extension or request an inspection to keep the permit valid.

**Q. I have finished building and would like my Certificate of Occupancy?**

A. You must submit a request for your Certificate of Occupancy on OPS or complete an application form and email or present to the front counter. We will check to ensure all inspections have been completed and all fees have been paid. Once all is in order, the Certificate of Occupancy will be available to download from the Online Planning System.

**Q. CUC turned off the electrical power in my building as it has not been occupied for 6 months. What do I do?**

A. A certified electrician must submit an application for re-connection of electrical power.

**Q. I need to make changes to my electrical meter as it has been damaged, what do I do?**

A. A certified electrician must submit an application for small electrical permit for modification to existing electrical service.

## INSPECTION PROCESS

Step 1: Once the permit has been issued, an inspection must be requested within one year of the date the permit was issued.

Step 2: Inspections must be requested at least once every six months to keep the permit valid.

Step 3: If the permit expires, please see the Permit Extension information sheet on our website.

Note: Inspection requests can be submitted online via the Online Planning System (OPS). The cost is \$10 per inspection. See Appendix for list of outside agency inspections required.

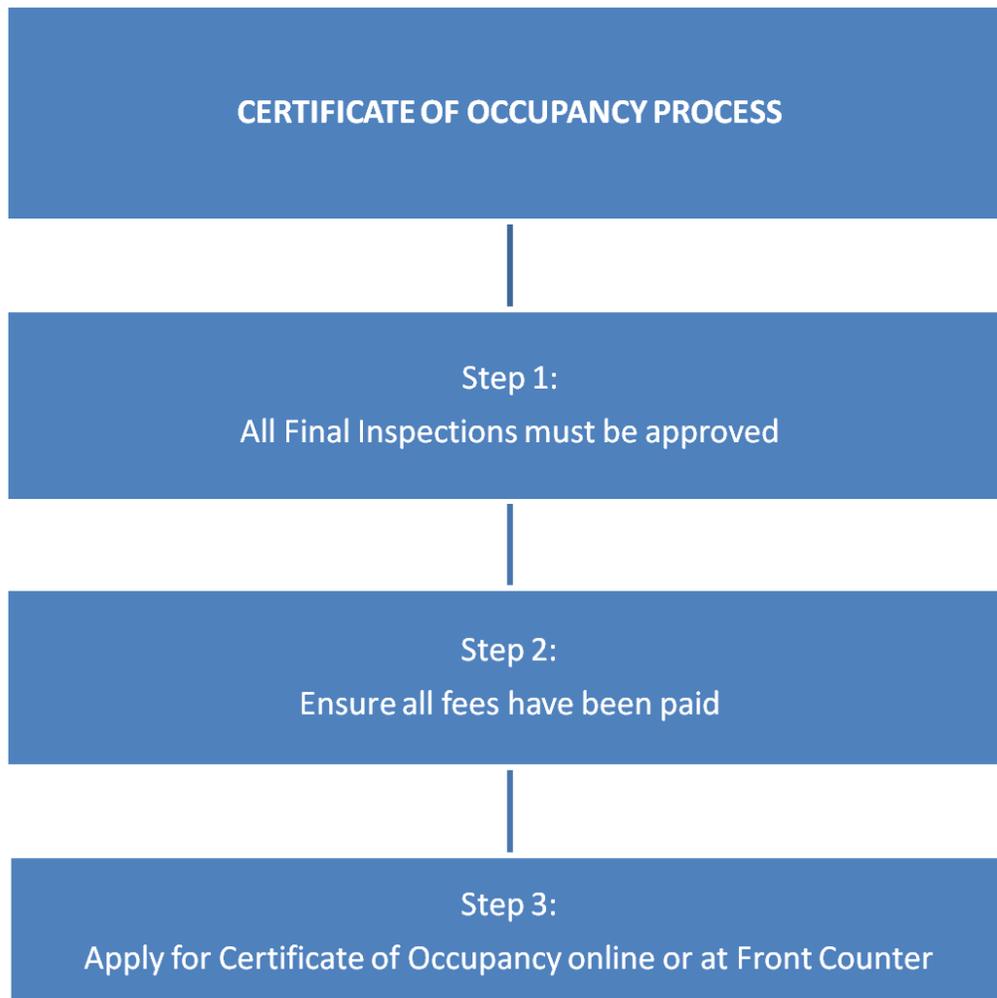
### INSPECTION FLOW CHART



## CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY PROCESS

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All final inspections must be complete and the balance of the infrastructure fee must be paid before the Certificate of Occupancy can be issued. All ancillary structures must be completed before a Certificate of Occupancy will be issued for the main building.





## APPENDIX

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1. Planning Application Checklist
2. Permit Application Checklist
3. Final Inspections for Outside agencies
4. Staff Organisation Chart

# Checklist –Planning Applications – Section 6 Planning Regulations

	<b>Site Plan Must Show the following:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Site lot plan at a convenient natural scale
<input type="checkbox"/>	The location of the proposed building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The location of existing buildings on the site and on adjacent land or label vacant
<input type="checkbox"/>	The front, rear and side setbacks (setback lines or dimensions)
<input type="checkbox"/>	The dimensions of relevant lots (for subdivisions) – 1:625, 1:1250 or 1:2500
<input type="checkbox"/>	The fronting roads giving their names and widths
<input type="checkbox"/>	The existing and proposed site levels
<input type="checkbox"/>	The water and sanitary drainage systems
<input type="checkbox"/>	The north point
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide space on the bottom right corner for stamps (e.g. 3” x 9” from title block)
	<b>Other Requirements</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Floor Plans to scale (1/8”=1’ or 1/4” = 1’)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Front, Side and Rear elevations to scale (1/8”=1’ or 1/4”=1’)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Every plan must have the name of the person that prepared it
<input type="checkbox"/>	Every plan must have a block and parcel and unit number (if applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>All plans</b> must have the statement “I hereby certify that all dimensions shown on this plan are correct” – under this please sign and put address
<input type="checkbox"/>	If the site is located on the seaside, Highwater Mark Survey is Required The High Water Mark Survey must be submitted to Lands and Survey for authentication and a copy of the receipt submitted to planning at same time as submission of application
<input type="checkbox"/>	Land Register (both sides) – Less than 60 days old – Date stamp Lands and Survey
<input type="checkbox"/>	Land Registry index map – Less than 60 days old – Date Stamp Lands and Survey
<input type="checkbox"/>	OPS Form must provide applicant name, P.O. Box, Email and phone number
<input type="checkbox"/>	Drawings must not have the statement “NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION”
<input type="checkbox"/>	Building details section on the OPS form completed for each structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cost of development section on the OPS form completed for each structure

**Note: Planning Notices should not be mailed until the application is accepted and paid**



# Submission Requirements for Permits (Residential)

## ARCHITECTURAL PLANS *(must be signed to certify dimensions correct)*

- Site plan
- Floor Plan(s)
- Elevations
- Min. (2) Section-cuts
- Door/window schedule (specify use of shutters or impact rating)
- Design pressure rating of windows/doors/garage doors

## STRUCTURAL PLANS *(Engineer drawings outside scope of code req. to be signed & sealed by engineer of record.)*

- Details of Soil Conditions on the structural plan
- Foundation Plans & reference details
- End-wall detail (depicting from footing to roof) with applicable reference details
- Roof, ceiling & floor framing plans (where applicable)
- Roof & floor truss plan with detail sheets (where applicable)

## MECHANICAL PLANS

- Mechanical site plan (Architectural site plan with applicable mechanical details can be utilized)
- Mechanical floor plan (AC duct runs w/ supply & return grills OR mini split units, kitchen & bathroom exhaust runs)
- AC Equipment Schedule & Exhaust Schedule
- AHU details & Condensor detail reflecting anchorage

## ELECTRICAL PLANS

- Electrical site plan (Architectural site plan with applicable electrical details can be utilized)
- Electrical Floor Plan Layout
- Electrical Panel Schedule
- Electrical Riser Diagram
- Electrical Load Calculations

## PLUMBING

- Plumbing site plan (Architectural site plan with applicable plumbing details can be utilized)
- Plumbing floor plan/riser

## NOTE

- Upload approved set with planning permission stamp. Third Party Plans must have planning permission stamp.
- Statement of certification with architect's signature must be applied to each sheet of **architectural set**
- Each sheet must bear project name, along with block & parcel
- Provide space on the bottom right corner or within the title block for stamps, in same location on every page
- Plans must not have the statement "Not for Construction"
- Drawings for each discipline must be uploaded individually as a full set (i.e. Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing, etc)



## DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

# INFORMATION SHEET FINAL INSPECTIONS

The following inspections are required from outside agencies before a Certificate of Occupancy or a Certificate of Completion can be granted for Apartments, Commercial, Industrial, or Institutional Projects.

Please request inspections from these agencies via the Online Planning System (OPS)

### National Roads Authority (NRA)

- New Developments and Additions - paving , drainage and sidewalk

### Water Authority (WAC)

- Grease Traps
- New Waste Water Treatment Plants
- New development connecting to existing Waste Water Treatment Plants
- Septic tanks for all developments except house or duplex

### Department of Environmental Health (DEH)

- Garbage Enclosure
- Pools not associated with house or duplex
- Not required for Fit-Outs
- Not required for restaurant Fit-Outs

### Fire Services (FS)

- New buildings with fire alarm or sprinkler systems
- Fire access around new buildings
- Fit-Outs in buildings with existing Fire Alarms and/or Sprinkler Systems



*Note: A Planning Final is required for all projects to ensure planning conditions have been met*

## Final Inspections Required for other Development

### House Applications

- Electrical Final
- Plumbing Final
- Mechanical Final
- Elevator Final *(if applicable)*
- Building Final
- Planning Final

### LPG Applications

- LPG Final
- Petroleum Final (PET)
- Planning Final

### Elevator Applications

- Elevator Acceptance (Final)

### Pool Applications

- Building Final
- Electrical Final
- Planning Final
- DEH plan review only (House/Duplex)
- DEH plan review and inspection (all other developments)

### PV Solar Applications

- Electrical Final
- Building Final

### Generator Applications

- Electrical Final
- Building Final
- Petroleum Final (PET)
- Planning Final

**SUBSTRUCTURE INSPECTIONS**

**First Stage of Substructure Inspections**

**Building**

Setbacks/Footings/Foundation

**Electrical**

Grounding

**Second Stage of Substructure Inspections**

**Plumbing**

Underground

**Gas (if applicable)**

Rough-in

**Electrical**

Slab

**Mechanical (if applicable)**

Rough-in

**Last Stage of Substructure Inspections**

**Building**

Slab

**SUPERSTRUCTURE INSPECTIONS**

**First Stage of Superstructure Inspections**

**Building**

7-Block Height Walls

Lintels

Belting

Roof - Nailing

**Second Stage of Superstructure Inspections**

**Electrical**

Ceilings/Walls

**Gas (if applicable)**

Rough-in

**Plumbing**

Rough-in/DWV

**Mechanical (if applicable)**

Rough-in

**Last Stage of Superstructure Inspections**

**Building**

Roof - Structural Framework

**FINAL INSPECTIONS**

**First Stage of Final Inspections**

**Plumbing**

Final Plumbing

**Gas (if applicable)**

Final gas

**Electrical**

Final Electrical

**Mechanical (if applicable)**

Mechanical Final

**Final Stage of Final Inspections**

**Building**

Final Building

**Outside Agencies**

(If Applicable)

**Planning**

Planning Final

**APPLY FOR FINAL CERTIFICATE**



**DEPARTMENT  
OF PLANNING**

**INSPECTION FLOW CHART**



# DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING ORGANISATIONAL DIAGRAM AND STAFF COMPLEMENT

