

Building Control

Guidance Note

Conservatories

Thinking about a conservatory?

Conservatories are a popular way to add extra space and value to a home, but they may require Building Regulation approval.

Building regulations are government rules that make sure a new, refurbished or extended building is safe to use and energy efficient. Certain buildings, such as conservatories, can be exempt from building regulations, but only if they follow certain rules.

This guidance note explains the criteria the conservatory must meet to make it exempt from building regulations. It also answers some frequently asked questions.

Points to consider

Definition of a conservatory is 'a room with a glass roof and walls attached to a house and used as a sun lounge or for growing delicate plants'.

A conservatory is classed as an "exempt building" under building regulations if:

Its internal floor area is less than 30m² **and** the roof and walls to be substantially glazed **and** any glazing in, or within 300mm of the doors or glazing within 800mm of the floor is safety glass **and** the structure is single storey and at ground level **and** it is permanently separated from the house by a door or patio window **and** the dwelling heating system not to extend into the conservatory, unless separate controls provided.

Please note

Even if the conservatory meets all the conditions above to qualify as an exempt building, installing any services (e.g. electricity, gas or water) inside it may change things. For example if it is planned to install a WC or shower room, a building regulation application will need to be submitted

Any electrical work in a conservatory should be carried out by an installer registered as a competent person with a government self-certification scheme.

If the conservatory fails to meet any of the exemption criteria, then a building regulation application will need to be submitted. Failure to do so may result in problems selling or re-mortgaging a dwelling at a later date.

Frequently asked questions

- **How should I separate my conservatory from the rest of the house?**
You should use French windows or patio doors. Even if the conservatory itself is exempt, the French windows or patio doors must comply with building regulations for both thermal insulation and safety
You may require a separate building regulation application if the door space is enlarged, as this is a structural alteration.
- **What type of glass should I use?**
Safety glass must be used in doors, glazing within 300mm of doors and any other glazing within 800mm of the finished floor level.
Safety glass is generally toughened or laminated and carries the British Standard kite mark. The number 6206 is stamped in one corner.
- **What if my conservatory is larger than 30m²**
You will need to submit a building regulation application. Visit our web pages at www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/buildingcontrol for further information and to download forms.
- **Can I put heating appliances in my conservatory?**
Yes – but radiators or heaters should have their own temperature controls and on/off controls. Therefore, the existing dwelling heating system should not extend into the conservatory, unless that part of the system can be controlled and shut off separately.
- **What happens if my conservatory is over a drain or sewer?**
Before the foundations are dug you should check with Severn Trent Water Ltd to see if you are building over or near a public sewer. If you are, you must protect the sewer pipes from any additional loads placed on them.
Severn Trent Water Ltd can be contacted on 01902 793871

For more information

If you require any further guidance regarding conservatories and exemption from building regulations please telephone 01543 464507 or e mail:
buildingcontrol@cannockchasedc.gov.uk

To find out more about building regulations, visit:
www.planningportal.gov.uk

To find out more on competent persons for electrical work, visit:
www.competentperson.co.uk

Conservatories may be covered by the Party Wall Act. For further information, visit:
www.partywallact.info