



BUILDING CONTROL SERVICES

BUILDING CONTROL PLANS ASSESSMENT AND ADVISORY SERVICE POLICY

**Issue : 01
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BUILDING CONTROL PERFORMANCE STANDARD



Amended July 2005
Amended 14TH.October 2008

1.0 INTRODUCTION

To enable a Building Control Service to operate effectively and efficiently it requires an up to date plans assessment policy. This policy needs to demonstrate commitment to maintaining performance standards in accordance with the approved standards produced by the DTLR which all LABC groups are committed to.

This policy is intended to incorporate flexibility to enable professional officers to use their skill and judgement in selecting priorities when checking an application for compliance, and making judgements on technical standards to Building Regulation Approved Documents.

The plan checking policy should be evaluated on a project by project basis taking into account the complexity of the project and the professional experience of the project officer.

The plan assessment policy for each project must be undertaken to ensure as far as possible that the application complies with the Building Regulations.

BCOs must always be aware of the financial restraint of the charges associated with the project. If the application is lacking considerable data the applicant should be invited to re-examine the submission. Broad advice will only be given in these cases.

The purpose of the plan assessment and design appraisal is to assist the process of complying with the requirements of the Building Regulations. Any contravention shown on the deposited plans should be identified and the designer given the opportunity to correct the plans. The checking surveyor may approve the plans conditionally subject to the agents/applicants approval.

It should be noted that there may be little to gain from an unduly pedantic approach to plan assessment, consideration must be given to the complexity of the project and the expected level of site inspection.

The Building Control Officer should where they consider it necessary alert the applicant to areas of legislation outside of the scope of the Building Regulations which may affect the design.

All BCO's involved in plans assessment will declare any relationship with the applicant or any financial interest prior to the examination of an application to the BCSM. A decision to proceed with an application where a relationship exists will be determined by the BCSM.

2.0 LEGISLATION

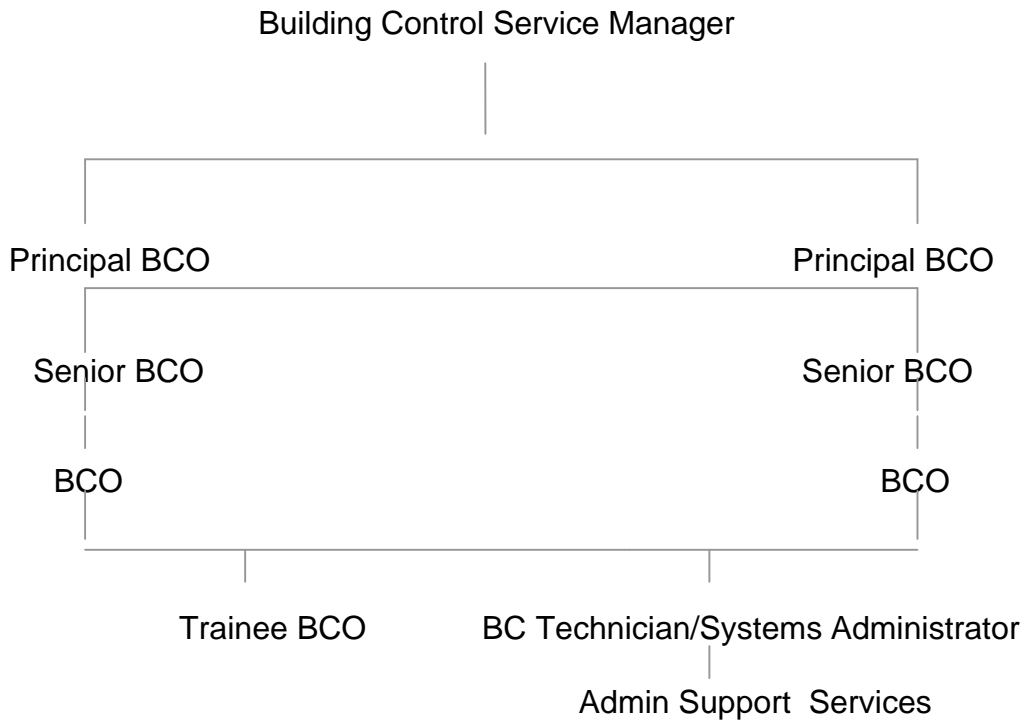
The Building Act 1984

The Building Regulations 2000 (As amended)

The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 1998

3.0 BUILDING CONTROL ESTABLISHMENT

The Building Control Service Manager will deploy staff in the most effective manner to provide an efficient and cost effective plans examination service.



4.0 RECORDS OF PLANS ASSESSMENT

As part of the plans assessment process key areas will be clearly recorded:

1. Any exempt building and work.
2. Identification of type of building work (domestic, commercial or housing).
3. The proposed use of the building, floor area, cubic capacity and number of storeys.
4. Where an extension, material alteration or a material change of use to an existing building are proposed the date of construction in respect of the existing building should be identified. This information should be available through site history contained on historic files.
5. Buildings fire resistance, and information on compartmentation and surface spread of flame.
6. Information relevant to a fire engineering where appropriate.

7. Building occupancy numbers, floor space factors used and means of escape provisions.
8. The assessed floor loading provided by the designer to the British Standards.
9. Information of local hazards, contamination, sewerage and services beneath or immediately adjoining the site and any information relating to known flooding.

4.1 CONSULTATION

There will be consultation –

Internally with:

- Development Control (via MVM 20/20)
- Policy & Heritage (Archaeology and listed buildings in conservation areas)
- Environmental Sustainability for:
 - (a) Food and Health & Safety
 - (b) Land contamination

Externally with:

- The Fire Authority (on all non-domestic buildings)
- Lincolnshire County Council (for s.38 of Highways Act)

- #### **4.2**
1. Surveyors will complete a plans examination check list.
 2. All records will be recorded on the file.
 3. Refusal notices will not be issued without giving the applicant the opportunity to amend the application or provide further information and additional approvals will be used wherever possible.
 4. Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) calculations will be provided for new dwellings.
 5. Where applications are of a complex nature a Principal Building Control Officer will take the lead with the application and the Building Control Officer will be suitably supervised.
 6. Any unusual or special types of construction will be clearly documented.
 7. The relaxing of any requirements of the Regulations or supporting Approved Documents of Building Regulations will be subject to a Principal BCO decision and by the BCSM depending on the circumstances. The reasoning will be clearly documented.
 8. Applicants will be encouraged to discuss proposals with BCOs prior to the formal submission of applications. Pre-application advice will be free of charge.

Members of the public will be able to avail themselves of this service during normal office hours but appointments will be encouraged.

9. Non domestic projects will only be subject to pre-application advice where a firm commitment to the use of LABC has been made. When this is not made no advice will be given and other information relating to local conditions and site specific issues will not be made available to the applicant, agent or designer or any other person involved with the project.
10. Access to historical file information will be available to those who have made a commitment to LABC and a charge may be levied which may be refundable at the discretion of the CBCO in certain circumstances depending on resource implications and other factors.
11. Participation in Development Team working (DTA) will be encouraged to meet the Council's main aims but caution will be maintained against known private sector building control service users.

5.0 APPROVAL & DECISION PROCESS

1. The system will be as follows:

Approvals will be used where -

- a. The Plans show compliance.
- b. The Plans which require amendment but can be dealt with by condition to supply further information or perform an act for compliance.
- c. Where Plans show contravention at the expiry of statutory period a refusal notice will be issued if all other options to approve cannot be used.
- d. When further information is supplied post conditional approval, a letter agreeing to the conditions will be sent to the applicant/agent.

6.0 GENERAL PROCEDURES

1. The general procedures listed in paras. 1 - 5 above must always be followed unless under special circumstances it is found necessary to deviate from them. Any deviation should be agreed with the BCSM and the reasons clearly recorded.
2. On receipt of an application the inspection performance standards inspection programme will be completed.
3. The application will be checked within the 10-day target time. If it has not been possible to approve or request amended details within the target time the responsible officer will advise the PBCO.
4. Contacts with the applicant and other consultees will be recorded on the MVM 20/20 system.
5. The plan checking sheet will always be completed taking into account 1 - 5 above.
6. Calculations sent to the Council's consulting engineer will be recorded in the 20/20 system and on the application monitoring sheet.
7. Where consultation takes place with the applicant or internally with any of the consultees in respect of amendments or otherwise records of discussions will be made on the system. E-mail copies will be saved in 20/20.
8. When officers determine applications all fields on the 20/20 system will be completed.
9. BCOs will authorise application approval through Support Services which will be returned to the PBCO for acceptance and issue.
10. All relevant information will be retained on file by the BCO and any unlinked information will be removed and all correspondence will be secured on file in date order.
11. Support Services will stamp all plans appropriately and date and mail notices to applicants.
12. All completed applications will be returned to BC for filing by Support Services.
13. When files are taken from the system acknowledgement cards will be inserted in its place.
14. Partnership applications will be forwarded to the relevant Inspection Authority as soon as possible after the application is made valid. Any amended plans should be forwarded to the Partner Authority and any

advice thought relevant, e.g. land fill or poor ground conditions. On notification from the IA that the plans comply approval notices will be issued with copies to LANTAC. The agreed National Partnership guidance will be followed in this respect.

15. Payment of fees to the Partner Authority will be authorised by the BC Technician on receipt of an invoice. This will be done to meet the Council's corporate performance indicators for payments. General payments for plans approval will be received directly from the Partner company.
16. Applications made with LANTAC approval certificates will be checked in the current register for validity. Any question of accuracy of an approved plan will be referred to the Checking Authority and not the owner/agent. Except where the checking of technical aspect falls outside the scope of the LANTAC certificate, (i.e. foundations/local conditions).
17. BCOs will record all time spent on plans examination and negotiations leading towards approval on the Time Management Recording system for costing purposes.
18. Where an approval relates to construction involving new adoptable highway construction the BCO will arrange for a copy of the approval notice to be sent to Lincolnshire County Council highway authority for the purposes of section 38 of the Act and advance payments code.
19. **IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH BCO TO FOLLOW THE PLAN ASSESSMENT POLICY.**

If you would like this information in an alternative format:- large print or electronically, please do not hesitate to contact us on (01522) 873390 or email: buildingcontrol@lincoln.gov.uk