

Planning Aid for London

Factsheet

Article 4 Directions

Planning Aid for London

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Planning Aid for London Factsheet: Article 4

This factsheet is a summary of permitted development, article 4 directions, and how they can affect your neighbourhood.

What are Permitted Development Rights and Article 4 Directions?

Permitted developments are types of development and building works that can be undertaken without needing to apply for planning permission. Permitted development rights are granted in section 3 of the Town and Country Planning Act and cover a variety of changes¹, from loft conversions to changing a space's designated use from a business to a home.

Permitted development rights don't apply everywhere. Borough Councils can adopt Article 4 directions to remove particular permitted development rights for the borough or a particular neighbourhood.

Why do Councils activate Article 4 Directions

Councils adopt article 4 directions to maintain control over certain forms of change or development in their boroughs. This does not mean that a particular type of development is forbidden; only that formal planning permission is required.

Using article 4 helps councils ensure that the types of development that happen in their boroughs are in line with their local plans and in the best interest for an area. For example, if an objective of the local plan is to support local high streets and businesses, the council may adopt an article 4 direction to remove the permitted development right to turn a commercial unit into a home. Property owners can still apply for that change, and the council will be able to approve or deny the application based on a balance of housing needs and the value of the high street.

In any case, a council needs to provide a good reason for activating article 4.

Article 4 Notifications

Article 4 directions can prevent or slow down certain types of changes across the borough. Before a council can adopt an article 4 direction, it must inform all the

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/when-is-permission-required#What-are-permitted-development-rights>

addresses in the affected area and hold a public consultation. The council can publicise the consultation via:

- Local advertisements
- Posting notices in the area
- and (if possible) by individual post

The consultation must last a minimum of 21 days. If you are in an affected area, you can take part in the consultation to support or oppose the direction.

Residents can also encourage their council to adopt a particular article 4 direction. Campaigns have been set up asking for article 4 directions to preserve gardens², and prevent family homes from being turned into bedsits or houseshares³.

If you are seeking to make changes to your home, national government has released guidance with details on the conditions for different types of permitted developments⁴. It is always best to seek advice from professional planners or your local council before proceeding with any new development.

Checking Your Council's Article 4 Directions

Councils must make information about their article 4 directions available to the public. The easiest way to check for these is through your council's website, in the planning policy section. You can also search online for "[your council's name]+ article 4".

Which councils have activated article 4 for particular domains

The table below details which Councils have adopted article 4 directions affecting the whole borough or parts of it. This includes article 4 directions that are part of conservation area controls. This table is not exhaustive and there may have been

² <https://www.redfrogassociation.org/campaign-for-an-article-4-direction/>

³ <https://www.derbytelegraph.co.uk/news/derby-news/derby-womans-campaign-better-streets-9014331>

⁴ See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/permitted-development-rights-for-householders-technical-guidance>

changes since the time of writing⁵. Please make sure you check your council's website for more details.

Council	Article 4 directions relating to...		
	Change of Use from commercial to residential	Home Alterations	Change of Use from family home to Homes of Multiple Occupancies (HMOs)
Barking and Dagenham		x	x
Barnet	x		x
Bexley	x	x	x
Brent	x		x
Bromley		x	x
Camden	x	x	
City of London	x	x	
City of Westminster	x	x	
Croydon		x	x
Ealing		x	
Enfield		x	x
Greenwich	x		x
Hackney	x	x	
Hammersmith and Fulham		x	
Haringey			x
Harrow		x	
Havering		x	x
Hillingdon	x		x
Hounslow	x	x	x
Islington	x	x	
Kensington and Chelsea	x	x	
Kingston	x	x	
Lambeth	x	x	
Lewisham		x	
Merton	x	x	x
Newham			x
Redbridge	x	x	x
Richmond	x	x	
Southwark	x		x
Sutton	x	x	
Tower Hamlets	x		x
Waltham Forest	x		x
Wandsworth	x	x	

⁵ 11 June 2024

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