

Street naming and building numbering

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Property & Legal - Guidance note

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Street names and building numbering affect everyday life in our city. Addresses have to be provided by law and, when made correctly, provide an easy method for identifying places for people who live here and also for visitors and people who work in the city. They assist the easy identification of premises by emergency services, postal services and utility providers. Street names can also help to strengthen the identity of a place or area, or show a connection with local history.

What is the legislation relating to street naming and building numbering?

The legislation that controls this function is contained within Article 11 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Northern Ireland) Order 1995.

Street naming

When do I need to make an application for a new street?

You need to make an application to us when the development starts on site if there will be a new public road leading into the development.

Who makes the application to Building Control?

The application for a new street can be made by the developer, architect, builder, housing association or (on very rare occasions) residents living in an unnamed street.

What documentation is required for a valid application for a new street name?

You need to complete an application form giving a first, second and third choice for the street names. You should provide the reason for the proposed names, for example a link to the local history or geography of the area. You will also need to provide:

- two site location maps which can be either A4 or A3 size indicating the start and end of the road.
- two site layout maps showing the arrangement of the houses and their site numbers (these are numbers for the buildings on site and are not the property numbers), and
- if the development contains apartments, their internal layout showing the entrances, floor levels and site numbers.

How do I know that the names I want to use are not already being used?

We check our records and also with the Royal Mail, to ensure that your proposed names are not already in use within the Belfast City Council area. In addition, we check that the names are not being used by councils which adjoin the Belfast City Council area.

A variation in the terminal word, i.e. 'street', road, 'avenue' etc may not be accepted as sufficient reason to duplicate a name other than where streets are adjacent or within one development.

If the name is already being used, we will inform you and tell you that we will be checking your second and third choices. If these are also being used, we will ask you for an alternative street name.

What happens if there are no conflicts or objections to the proposed name?

If our research shows that the name does not conflict with existing approved names and Royal Mail has no objections, the name is included on our report to the council's People and Communities Committee recommending it for approval.

If the street name is approved by the People and Communities Committee it is then put forward for approval by the full council.



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When the name is approved, we will number the properties in the street. We will inform you, as the applicant, that the name is approved. We will supply you with site layout and location maps and give you a list of the property addresses. The new street name and postal numbering scheme will then be available to all relevant bodies and agencies.

Developers who use a marketing name for a site must make it clear to any prospective purchaser that the marketing name is not part of the official postal address.

Purchasers of new properties should be aware that the postal number may be different to the site number. It is the postal number that must be used for your postal address.

Bi-lingual signs?

When a request and initial survey of $\frac{1}{3}$ of residents for dual language signs is received, we will carry out a survey of residents registered on the electoral roll. If more than $\frac{2}{3}$ of occupants within a street or road wish to have a dual language sign, it will be included on our report to the council's People and Communities Committee recommending it for approval.

If the request for a dual language sign is approved by the People and Communities Committee it is then put forward for approval by the full council. When the request is approved, Building Control will arrange to have a sign manufactured and erected.

Maintaining street signs?

When a street is created in a new development, the new street name signs are provided by the property developer to council specifications. The council will then take responsibility for maintaining the street name signs.

Building numbering

Individual properties built on plots of land or existing buildings converted into new units will be numbered into the existing relevant street. If there

is not a sequential number available, the council will use the addition of letters (for example 2a). We will notify you of the numbering allocation we choose for your property.

Properties (including those on corner sites) are numbered according to the street in which the main entrance is located. We will not manipulate the numbering of a building to give it a 'prestige' address or to avoid an address which is thought to have undesired associations.

Apartments are numbered not lettered, for example Flat 2, 21 Smith Street (NOT Flat A, 21 Smith Street), as letters are used for infill properties.

The council has no powers to name a house or building. Building names alone are not favoured by the council or the emergency services; a number readily identifies the relative location of a property in the street.

Where a property has a number, it must be used and displayed. Normally it should be placed so that it can be easily read from the public highway.

Place and Economy

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