

Helsinki

Conservatory instructions



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Conservatories

Conservatories contribute to the City of Helsinki's goals for a vibrant urban space that is attractive, welcoming and beautiful. High-quality conservatories that are appropriate to their surroundings can contribute to the city's vitality and improve the business conditions – especially in the relatively long winter season.

These instructions complement the city's Terrace instructions. The person setting up the conservatory and its tenant must take into account the same regulatory guidelines as for a normal seasonal terrace.

Conservatories refer to covered and glass-enclosed outdoor spaces for year-round use that are directly connected to commercial spaces. Conservatories are built on top of the existing street surface without breaking the street surface. Conservatories are designed to be attached to the façade and installed in front of the business premises as a separate structure. Conservatories are outdoor spaces.

The structural elements of conservatories must be durable and lightweight. The glazing must not be airtight, and should allow enough airflow for sufficient replacement air, even when the windows are closed. The glazing should be clear and capable of being opened. The glazing must be clearly visible and marked, and the entrances must stand out from their surroundings so that access is unobstructed and there is no risk of collisions or accidents. The conservatory must be capable of being dismantled even on short notice for work on municipal utilities or emergency work.

If the commercial space will have an exterior wall demolished to open up access to the terrace, this is a building extension, not a glassed-in street terrace. Also, if the glass-enclosed space requires its own ventilation system, it is considered an extension of the building's interior space rather than a conservatory. You must always apply for a building permit for a building extension, and you must have the building

rights for it. Extending a building to the street area usually requires a change in the local detailed plan or a separate decision to exempt it.

The safety of egress from a conservatory must be guaranteed, taking into account the size of the space and the number of people, including those using assistive devices. Conservatories must also not compromise the safety of egress from commercial premises.

Place of a conservatory

Conservatories must be designed and built in accordance with the characteristics of the street space and its surroundings. Their construction in front of commercial spaces will be decided on a case-by-case basis. You may not set up a terrace if it impedes the use of public urban space, access to the property, accessibility or traffic safety. In addition, you must comply with the regulations of the local detailed plan and take into account the suitability of the terrace to its surroundings. In the case of conservatories, it is also important to consider winter maintenance (including snow removal) at the planning stage.

When planning to set up a conservatory, you must pay special attention to the surrounding traffic and the values of the urban environment. You should consider traffic and pedestrian volumes, speed

limits, parking spaces, street lights, street trees, traffic signs, other street fixtures, and bikeways, as well as the space needed for the unobstructed movement of emergency vehicles. In addition, you have to guarantee adequate distances from pedestrian crossings, public transport stops and tram rails, and the possibility of servicing infrastructure, such as sewers.

The installation and use of terraces must enhance the city's vitality and urban landscape. It must not detract from the value of the cultural environment. The street terrace must leave enough space for walking and other traffic, maintenance (including storm-water drainage and snow removal) and emergency exits. It must not impair road safety, accessibility or vegetation.

A terrace installation must never reduce free space on the pavement to a width of less than 150cm. Conservatories require more free space around them than this minimum requirement, which will be examined on a case-by-case basis. When designing a conservatory, you should especially consider the winter maintenance requirements and snow removal from the street area.

There are sections of streets in the pedestrian area of the city centre where terraces are not allowed. This also applies to conservatories. For a map and more information on street dimensions, please see the [Terrace instructions](#).

Food stalls

A conservatory can also be a food stall, which is a structure that resembles a greenhouse, equipped with glass or plastic window panes. These can be separated by no more than one street from the restaurant or café (food establishment) with which they are associated. These are also built on top of the existing street surface.

Food stalls are treated as conservatories in permitting procedures, and they need a permit from Building Control Services.

In the case of food stalls planned for year-round use, you must take into account the snow load and the functionality of snow removal. Food stalls cannot be equipped with heating that poses a fire risk or other health hazards.

Food stalls can be used on outdoor terraces during the summer terrace season, 1 April – 31 October, when their rental price list follows the terrace price list. If the food stall is being built for year-round use, the lease agreement will follow the agreement and pricing of conservatories.

Building a conservatory

Building a conservatory requires the consent of the property owner and, in public areas of the city, a lease agreement with the city. Building conservatories also requires a building permit issued by Building Control Services.

The property owner's consent must be in writing. We recommend requesting the owner's consent on a ready-made form provided by the city, but you can also request it in writing in other ways. You must obtain consent from the person authorised to represent the owner of the building on the property. Consent can be given by the competent representative of the property, for example, the board of the housing company or the property manager.

A permit is required from Building Control, as the conservatory attaches to the façade of the adjacent building, has covering and solid walls, and its construction may affect the façade of the building, street space and cityscape. Plans for conservatories must be commissioned from a qualified professional.

The lease agreement for using the street area is made with the landowner. In the public areas of the City of Helsinki, the lease agreement for renting the terrace is made with the Urban Environment Division's Land Use and Monitoring unit. The lease agreement template, information on the necessary attachments and the price list are available on the [City of Helsinki's website: hel.fi](https://hel.fi) > Business and work > Businesses and entrepreneurs > Permits and facilities for businesses > Outdoor seating area and parklet permits > Conservatory permits More information: ulkoilma@hel.fi.

Rent is paid monthly for the use of the land, based on the surface area it occupies. By the end of the lease agreement, the tenant must remove the structures and restore the area and façade to their original condition unless otherwise agreed in writing. Any damage caused by the fixtures and structures must be repaired by the tenant at their own expense.

The agreement may be terminated with one month's notice by sending a written notice of termination to the Land Use and Monitoring unit. If the city terminates the contract, the notice period is three months. If the city is forced to terminate the terrace agreement for an urgent reason, for example, due to street works or changes in land use in the area, the notice period is two weeks.

More information on fees, permit processing and controls related to setting up a terrace is available in the [Terrace instructions](#).

Terrace regulations

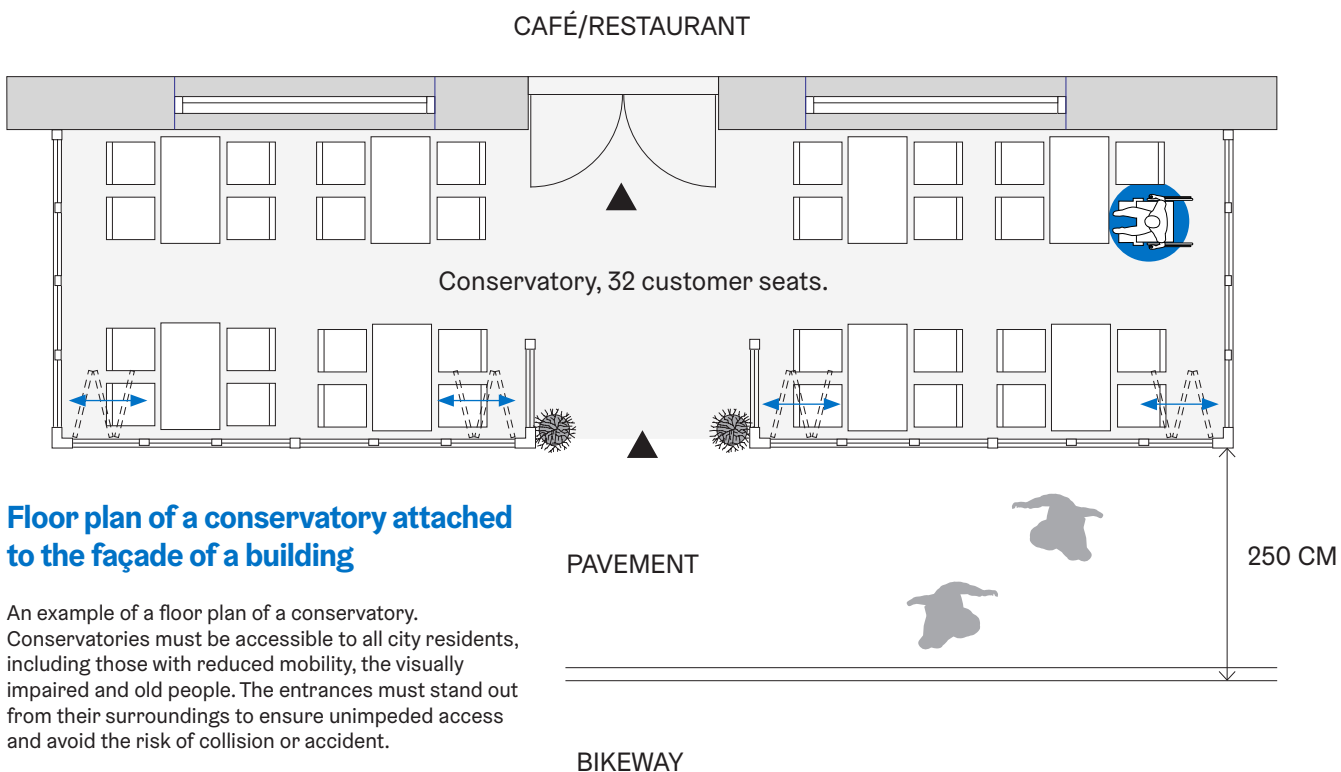
Due to noise, the opening hours of terraces are limited to the period between 7:00 and 23:00 in residential buildings or in the immediate vicinity of residential properties. Property owners' rules may also limit opening hours. Sound systems on terraces must always be set to levels where the noise does not cause a nuisance or disturbance to neighbours. At night, from 22:00 to 7:00, the use of audio equipment is completely prohibited in the vicinity of residential apartments, lodging or treatment facilities.

Accessibility requirements, the terrace base, furniture and their placement, and the quantities of toilet facilities are described in the [Terrace instructions](#). The same requirements apply to conservatories in terms of safety, order, cleanliness, and serving drinks. The Terrace instructions also address ecological considerations and advertising restrictions, which also apply to conservatories. Conservatories must comply with the requirements of the Tobacco Act.

When they start operating a terrace, the restaurant or café operator must notify the city's environmental services, which monitors food safety issues on terraces. In addition, the public order and safety of outdoor areas is supervised by the police, and restaurant operations are supervised by the Southern Finland Regional State Administrative Agency, the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health (Valvira) and the rescue authority.

¹ The complexity of the architectural project depends on the site and the project characteristics. Designing glass terraces is often demanding, in which case the designer must be a university-trained architect or structural architect (Applied Sciences).

Size examples

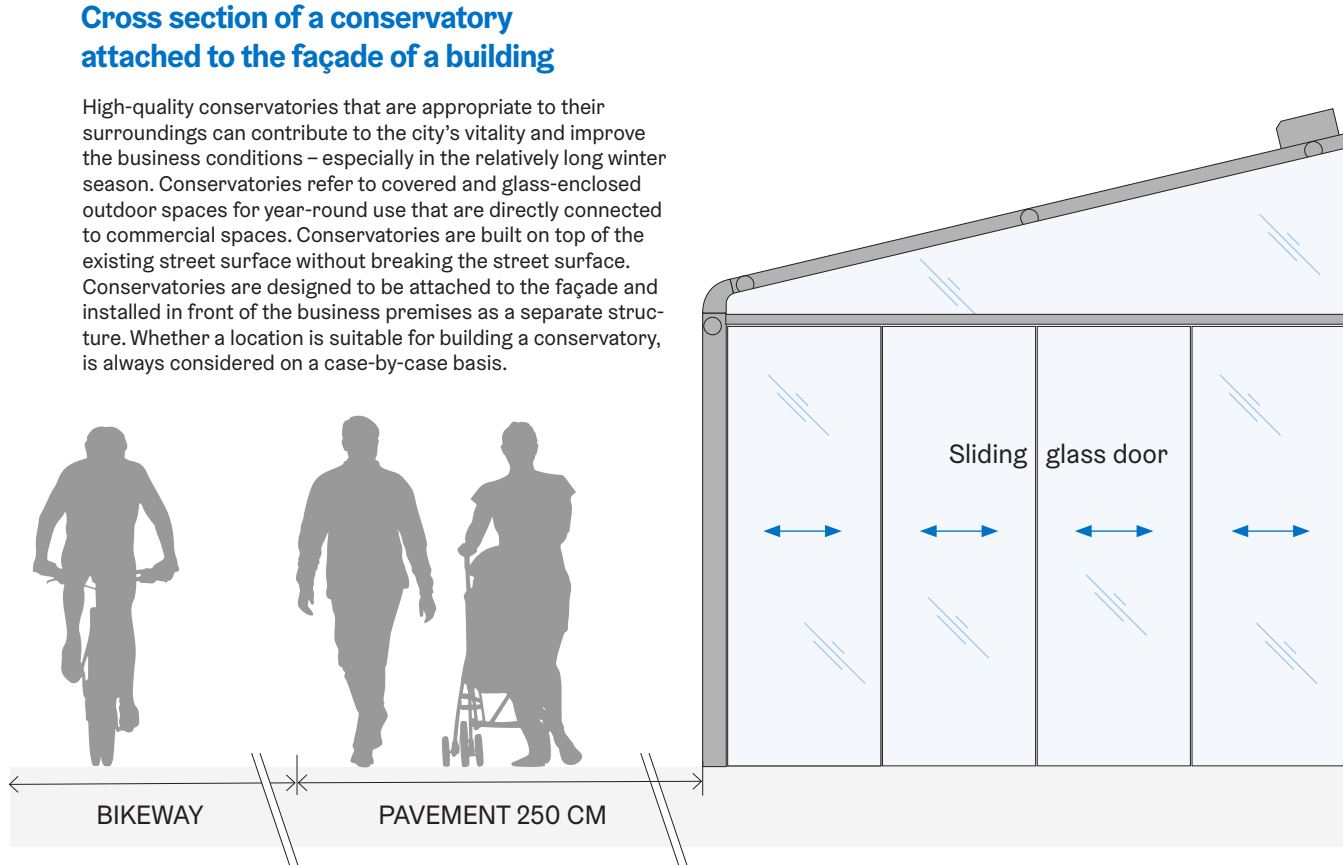


Floor plan of a conservatory attached to the façade of a building

An example of a floor plan of a conservatory. Conservatories must be accessible to all city residents, including those with reduced mobility, the visually impaired and old people. The entrances must stand out from their surroundings to ensure unimpeded access and avoid the risk of collision or accident.

Cross section of a conservatory attached to the façade of a building

High-quality conservatories that are appropriate to their surroundings can contribute to the city's vitality and improve the business conditions – especially in the relatively long winter season. Conservatories refer to covered and glass-enclosed outdoor spaces for year-round use that are directly connected to commercial spaces. Conservatories are built on top of the existing street surface without breaking the street surface. Conservatories are designed to be attached to the façade and installed in front of the business premises as a separate structure. Whether a location is suitable for building a conservatory, is always considered on a case-by-case basis.



Application instructions

Building a conservatory:

1 Start by consulting Building Control Services to ensure that your site is viable for entering into a lease agreement for a conservatory

- You can start by exploring the valid local detailed plan in the city's map service and ensuring that your project is in accordance with the plan: kartta.hel.fi > choose "In English" from the top right corner > City and traffic planning > Valid > Detailed plans
- Submit a consultation request to lupapiste.fi
- Once you have received preliminary approval from Building Control for the placement of your conservatory, you can proceed to the next step in the process. You will still need to apply for an official building permit from Building Control for your conservatory at a later stage.

2 Submit an application to rent a conservatory. In public areas of the city, you will conclude the lease agreement with the city

- The lease agreement template and a list of attachments are available online at the city's website on [the businesses and permits page: hel.fi](http://thebusinessesandpermitspage.hel.fi) > Business and work > Businesses and entrepreneurs > Permits and facilities for businesses > Outdoor seating area and parklet permits > Conservatory permits
- The city will determine whether it can lease the area to the applicant for the intended use they have indicated and will request any additional information they need from the applicant. The city may need to seek input from other relevant parties to make a decision.
- The city makes their decision on the lease. After that, you will receive the lease agreement for your glass-enclosed street terrace to sign.

3 Apply for a permit from Building Control Services before starting construction via the lupapiste.fi service

- The lease agreement is a required attachment when applying for an action permit or building permit for a conservatory from Building Control.
- You must attach the main drawings to the Building Control permit application, prepared and signed by the building designer in accordance with the regulations. In addition, Building Control will need the same attachments that you submit when applying for the permit to lease a terrace area.

4 Notification of a food business and alcohol serving licence

- If you are serving or preparing food on your conservatory, or the number of customer seats increases significantly with a new conservatory or its expansion, a notification of food business in accordance with the Food Act is likely to be necessary. Check with the Environmental services' food advisory service to verify whether a notification is necessary. For more information and guidance, please contact the Environmental services' food advisory service. You can submit a food business notification at ilppa.fi
- If you are serving alcoholic beverages on the conservatory and the number of customer seats in the serving area increases with the new conservatory, it will require a change to your alcohol serving licence. For more information and guidance, please contact the Regional State Administrative Agency. [You can submit the application at avi.fi](http://avi.fi) > Businesses > Licenses, notices and applications > Alcohol serving and sales

Application for an alteration or extension to a conservatory:

- 1** If there are changes to the size or rental period of your conservatory, or you make changes to the structural elements or changes that may affect the cityscape (façade changes, advertising), please apply for a permit for the changes.
- 2** See the steps in the instructions above: **Application instructions, Building a conservatory, sections 1 to 3.**
- 3** If you are serving or preparing food on your conservatory, or the number of customer seats increases significantly, it is likely that you must submit a notification of a food business in accordance with the Food Act. If the number of customer seats in the serving area increases with the expansion, it requires a change to your alcohol serving permit. For more information and application instructions, see **Application instructions, Building a conservatory, section 4.**

Applying for a land-use plan amendment or exemption

- The project may require a land-use plan amendment or a separate decision to exempt a deviation from it, if your plan involves the expansion of a restaurant or café space (e.g., the space requires ventilation or is open to the main restaurant space), and not a light-weight, conservatory as defined above. You will need a qualified designer for the project.
- Please contact Building Control at lupapiste.fi for advice.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information about lease agreements, please contact the Urban Environment Division's Land Use and Monitoring unit via email at ulkoilma@hel.fi

Requests for consultation from Building Control and action and building permits for conservatories are available from Lupapiste: lupapiste.fi

Environmental services' food advisory service:
kymp.elintarviketurvallisuus@hel.fi

More information about alcohol serving licences is available from the Regional State Administrative Agency:
avi.fi

The logo for Helsinki, featuring the word "Helsinki" in a white, bold, sans-serif font inside a white outline of a speech bubble or a rounded rectangle with a pointed bottom.

Helsinki

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