

Construction Permits & Documentation

A complete guide to Bulgarian building permits for EU & British property buyers

Why This Document Matters

Before purchasing a newly built property near Burgas, buyers must verify that all construction documentation is lawful and complete. Under Bulgarian law (Spatial Planning Act – ZUT) and EU Directive 2011/83/EU, sellers are obligated to provide full disclosure of all permits before a sale is concluded.

1. The Bulgarian Permit System – Overview

Bulgaria's construction permitting framework is governed by the **Spatial Planning Act (Zakona za Ustroystvo na Teritoriyata – ZUT)**, last amended in 2023 to align with EU environmental and energy standards. Every new residential building must pass through a mandatory sequence of administrative approvals before it may be legally sold or occupied.

2. Key Permit Documents – Explained

Permit for Design (Razreshenie za Proektirane)

Issued by the municipal chief architect, this authorises the developer to commission detailed architectural and engineering plans. It confirms the land is zoned for residential use (usually Zone Zh1 or Zh2 near Burgas) and that the proposed building parameters comply with the Detailed Zoning Plan (PUP/PZ).

Building Permit (Razreshenie za Stroezh)

The core permit, issued under Art. 148 ZUT by the Regional Directorate for National Construction Control (DNSK) or the municipal authority. It approves the full architectural design, structural calculations, fire-safety layout, and energy performance certificate (EPC, mandatory under EU Directive 2010/31/EU – EPBD). Buyers should request a certified copy.

Commencement Protocol (Protokol za Nachalo na Stroitelstvo – Protocol 2)

Signed before any earthworks begin, this document records the construction start date, confirms the appointed licensed site supervisor (technical manager), and activates the contractor's liability insurance. It is archived at DNSK.

Construction Supervision Journal (Kniga za Nadzor)

A daily log maintained on-site by the licensed construction supervision company (independent from the developer). Buyers may request excerpts showing compliance checks, material test results, and any deviations from approved plans.

Act 14 – Structural Completion

Issued when the load-bearing structure (foundations, columns, slabs) is complete and inspected. Signals that the building envelope is structurally sound and that finishing works may begin.

Act 15 – Final Inspection Protocol

A multi-party protocol signed by the developer, contractor, project designers (architect, structural, MEP engineers), independent supervision, and municipal representative. It certifies the building matches the approved permit and is ready for occupancy testing. This is the pre-condition for the Use Permit.

Use Permit / Permit for Exploitation (Razreshenie za Polzvane – Act 16)

Issued by DNSK under Art. 177 ZUT, this is the final, legally binding certificate that the building is safe, complete, and fit for habitation. **No property should be purchased for use without Act 16.** Buying 'off-plan' (before Act 16) is lawful but carries completion risk – see our Buying Process guide.

Energy Performance Certificate (Sertifikat za Energiyna Efektivnost)

Mandatory under Bulgarian Ordinance No. RD-16-1594/2013 and EU Directive 2010/31/EU. New buildings in Bulgaria must achieve at least energy class C; EU regulations push towards near-zero energy buildings (NZEB) for post-2021 construction. The EPC must be handed to the buyer at the notary signing.

3. EU & British Buyer Checklist

Document	Purpose
Land Registry Extract	Confirms the developer legally owns the plot (Art. 22 Cadastre Act).
Valid Building Permit	Check expiry – permits lapse if construction does not start within 3 years (Art. 153 ZUT).
Act 15 or Act 16	Depending on completion status at time of purchase.
EPC Certificate	Minimum class C for new builds.
Notarised Plot Sketch (Skitsa)	From the Cadastre Agency (AGKK).
Geodetic Survey Plan	Confirms building footprint matches permit.
Encumbrance Certificate	From Burgas Registry Agency – confirms no mortgages or liens exist on the property.
Fire Safety Clearance	Issued by the Ministry of Interior Fire Safety Directorate.
Water & Sewage Connection Certificate	From ViK Burgas – confirms utilities are legally connected.

4. Post-Brexit Note for British Buyers

Since 1 January 2021 British nationals are treated as non-EU (third-country) nationals under Bulgarian law. However, construction permit documentation requirements are **identical for all buyers** regardless of nationality – the permits attach to the property, not the buyer. British buyers should additionally request an apostilled translation of key permits into English for their own records and for UK mortgage lender requirements if applicable.

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